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**The Gold Rush/
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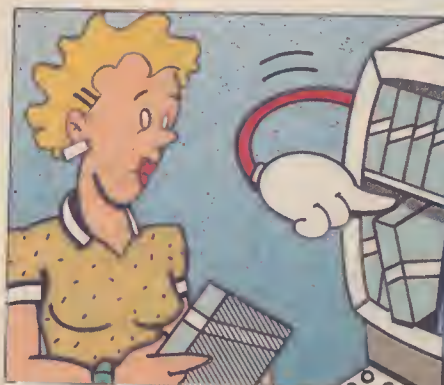
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Channel One

How-to How To

In the past year there has been a proliferation of tapes that we categorize as "how to" or "service" video. The premise is simple: videotapes often make excellent teaching tools. The quality of these tapes is sometimes iffy; a squash-racquets video we received was almost unwatchable because of poor production values, though the practical advice seemed sound. In that case, however, it might not have mattered anyway. Squash is the kind of game that doesn't lend itself to cameras simply because video optics cannot keep up with a little black ball that moves around a four-walled court at such great speed. Our review policy on these tapes is largely arbitrary. We try to pick those likely to attract a wide readership, naturally, but we also like to tell you when we especially like one or dislike one (and why).

If we allowed it, how-to video could probably rule our lives, and at the very least take over normal quotidian matters. For example, the following tapes are real releases and threaten to quickly wear out heads in the most robust VCRs if this schedule were followed every day.

- 7 a.m. *Let's Jazzercise.*
- 8 a.m. *8 Minute Makeovers.*
- 9 a.m. *Jerry Baker's House Plant Tips and Tricks.*
- 10 a.m. *Basic French by Video.*
- 11 a.m. *Wealth—Getting It...Keeping It.*
- Noon. *Sushi (or Tempura).*
- 1 p.m. *Video Guide to the Birds of North America.*
- 2 p.m. *Effective Writing.*
- 3 p.m. *Bass Fishing: Top to Bottom.*
- 4 p.m. *Golf My Way.*
- 5 p.m. *A Guide to Making Love.*
- 6 p.m. *Jane Fonda's Workout for Pregnancy, Birth, and Recovery.*
- 7 p.m. *The Slim Gourmet.*
- 8 p.m. *How to Teach Your Baby to Read.*
- 9 p.m. *Marvin Mitchelson on Divorce.*
- 10 p.m. *Less Stress in 5 Easy Steps.*

The above lineup, a mere sampling of what's available, should exhaust even the most avid videophile.

* * *

Our story on Vladimir Zworykin and Philo Farnsworth is the culmination of six months of research and has a rather unusual genesis. Writer Frank Lovece had worked for Chuck Azar, a videophile who published a video periodical, *Instant Replay*. Azar had been friendly with Zworykin and had introduced the two. Most of the articles Lovece had seen on television's origins seemed like nothing more than rewritten press releases from RCA. He decided to probe further.

"I kept running across the name of Philo Farnsworth," Lovece said. "Now, back in high school before I started writing about video, I was one of those early experimenters with the first black & white Portapak. And as I continued my interest in video in college, I began hearing the name of Farnsworth as the 'real inventor' of television. People debated it, but in the end always agreed the topic was fruitless. It was too long ago, there was no proof, and we'll never really know. *Etcetera, etcetera.*"

His research took him to Miami, where he went through detailed notes of countless hours of Zworykin-Azar conversations, including the reading of Zworykin's unpublished autobiography. We also sent Lovece to Washington, D.C. to the patent library, where he found a trail that let him track down Farnsworth's widow. After several trips to Princeton, New Jersey where Lovece spoke with people who knew Zworykin, he finally completed a mammoth two-part article, which will be concluded in the September issue. Lovece's incisive reporting, if nothing else, proves that TV's invention was a complex affair—and that thanks to Farnsworth's contributions, historians have a whole lot of revisionist thinking to do.

—The Editors

video

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*BET value: The measure indicates the fineness of the magnetic particles contained on a tape expressed in units of square meters per gram (m²/g). The higher the BET value, the finer and more numerous the particles—and the greater the tape's video and audio performance capability.

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Fast Forward

Late-Breaking News

Shoestring Supersystem

The convenience of mix-'n'-match remote control is available in RCA's Dimensia system for over \$5000—or from GE for under \$150! Control Central is a new remote-control device which can learn the specific infrared pulse codes of up to four of your video or audio components—TVs, VCRs, stereo gear, cable converters. And at about 8 by 3 by 1-1/2 inches it's only slightly larger than one of the average-size remotes it comes to bury.

Just place an original remote unit and Control Central head-to-head and go through the functions with Central in Learn mode. The new device's computer memory stores the original's specific infrared command codes and can then carry out any remote function of the original. An LCD indicates the command being performed.

Naturally, Control Central can be reprogrammed, so products can be added or removed at will. GE says its unit will control "virtually any audio or video product manufactured today"—if that product has an infrared remote. Wired models need not apply.

Copy Notes

Film studio execs and program distributors spend sleepless nights pondering how to keep rascally pirates from selling illegally copied tapes.

One radically different—and round—about—anti-counterfeit process is being tried by Karl-Lorimar Home Video. They're packaging a

specially encoded card with their *Jane Fonda Workout* tapes. Customers send them in and a laser reader can tell if the card (and thus presumably the tape it came with) is a counterfeit. Of course, the trick is getting people to send in those cards.

Programmers also had high hopes for Macrovision—the new copy-guard system which Embassy used for its *Cotton Club* release ("Fast Forward," July 1985). But as often happens with sudden romances, Macro doesn't look all that marvelous in the clear light of dawn. First problem: the process is currently available only for VHS tapes. It's still smooth sailing for Beta-based thieves. Second problem: there are persistent rumors that Macrovision, which works by tricking a recording VCR's Automatic Gain Control (AGC), is easily defeatable by professional copiers with just a modicum of determination and processing gear. In other words, casual swipers who wouldn't have bought an extra tape copy anyway may be foiled, but the big bad pros who copy for cash will continue on their evil way.

Big Dish Dues

Earth-station owner groups such as SPACE have long been saying that no sir, their members aren't cable signal crooks; they're just catching what's raining down, and dying for cabling to work out a viable way for them to pay for services rendered.

Their prayers are about to be answered. A company called M/S-Com has announced availability of

a descrambler for the soon-to-be garbled pay channel signals from HBO, Cinemax, and other services. The box, which will cost \$395, will be available both from cable companies, big-dish dealers, and the manufacturer. It will need to be programmed individually and will give dish owners the right and ability to buy monthly cable programming either from local cabling or directly from the pay services.

Size Counts

Both Zenith and RCA have announced new odd-size TVs—27 inchers, boob tubes that look bigger and are bigger than the next door neighbor's 25-inch behemoth. But similarities between the new entries end with the tape measure. Zenith's seven console models all have MTS stereo—and standard, curved picture tubes. They're priced from \$1100 to \$1400. RCA's deluxe consoles (price TBA) feature an exclusive Square Planar (SP) tube. New tube technology makes the SP's front panel almost flat, producing a nearly distortion-free image from side viewing angles—and giving the impression of an even larger-than-27-inch picture.

Riders in the Sky

The National Simulcast Racing Network (NSRN) is off and running—a satellite service that beams horseraces around the world for "simulcast betting." Currently Meadowlands, New Jersey ponies are being seen at tracks in Illinois, Maryland, and Ohio; and NSRN has plans for sending video races to and from tracks


around the world.

Pick Me a Winner

The major networks have promised not to tell us what they know—namely the winners of most elections long before the votes are officially counted. Last November, there were complaints that networks used their sophisticated exit polling techniques to announce victors before polls were closed, thus discouraging potential voters—and possibly influencing election results.

Recently, ABC, CBS, and NBC all reaffirmed their promise to Congress to stop projecting results too soon—but only if Congress imposes uniform poll closing times in return. Uniform closing will allow networks to announce winners simultaneously, as soon as the voting ends. But rival network spokesmen all seemed to agree that if Congress doesn't establish uniformity, or tries to legally curtail TV polling itself, then all bets are off. Broadcasters will go to the courts to protect their right to poll and tell.

Tape-of-the-Month

Time's Book-of-the-Month Club seems to be giving up on getting people to read. Its video label has a new series of "video shorts"—seven 10-minute cassettes which it possibly hopes will capture the attention of people with no attention spans at all. Its first offerings—available only by mail—include five children's stories and two selections from a longer tape on cooking with chocolate. All the shorts are an affordable \$9.95. 



A sergeant's murder.



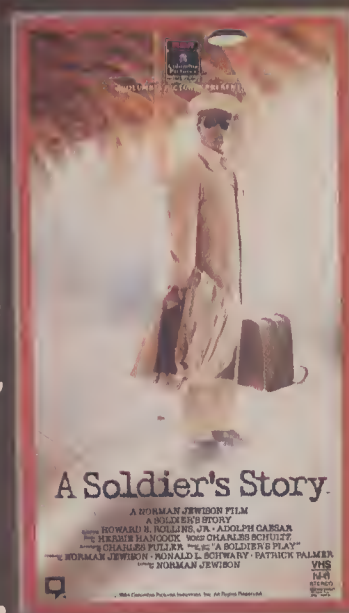
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VHS



Beta



Feedback

Readers Air Their Views

The Eyes Have It

Thanks for the long-awaited top-end monitor playoffs ["Eyes On: 25-Inch Screens," June 1985]. Now we have the World Series contenders, Sony XBR vs. Proton 602M. Both are grandslammers. I'll be waiting patiently in the stands for the video-camera playoffs.

David Cannon
Valley Center, Calif.

Fair Playback

Advertisements may be an important source of revenue—but when a subscriber feels cheated by a couple of these advertisers, all the other ads in the magazine suffer a loss of credibility. I returned one "full-length uncut" tape because it contained many edit glitches. The refund was sent with profanity and a restocking charge deducted. Both charges should be stated in the ad or on the order form. Another order never arrived even though I have sent proof of my canceled check twice. I can't even get a reply. Since mail order is an important source to many people, there should be a stated code for advertisers and a method of feedback for reader grievances. My past experiences with Discotronics, Beerger Productions, and CBS Video Club have been satisfactory. Another supplier, however, responded to my complaints with profanity while another has not delivered an order I placed last September.

Ronald Meyer
Milford, Ill.

We do not condone advertisers cheating readers. We pass on all complaints sent to "Feedback" to our ad department.

Super Vision

I have enjoyed your magazine since the first issue. I am writing in an attempt to locate a movie, *Allegro Non Troppo*. I am looking for Beta Hi-Fi but would settle for a VHS copy. Is this film still available in the U.S.? Also, will there be prerecorded SuperBeta tapes in the future?

William E. Vest II
Madison, Ind.

Allegro Non Troppo is an RCA/Columbia release and has been out for more than a year. At presstime Sony has just introduced a "printer" for SuperBeta program duplication, but it is too early to gauge the response of the commercial tape duplicators.

Ill 'Wind'

Having survived the media hype accorded the long-awaited official U.S. video release of *Gone with the Wind*, I dutifully marched over to my local video store and plunked down two dollars to rent it. Saturday evening some friends and I gathered around their large-screen projection TV to view the wonders of the recently discovered internegative.

What a bummer! The image on the large screen was soft (later confirmed on my Sony Trinitron). Color, while good at times, was hardly impressive. The remastered soundtrack was at best merely acceptable most of the time and on more than a few occasions the background noise was quite distracting. Often it sounded as if someone were standing

off-camera crushing paper into a microphone. In several scenes the picture momentarily froze onscreen.

The next morning I played my nearly year-old quasilegal Japanese LV disc. The colors on the disc were brighter and more vivid (although here too scenes looked artificial), and the sharpness was almost perfect. The rechanneled stereo soundtrack was almost perfect. One particularly noisy scene on the tape also was noisy on the disc, but nothing compared to the tape.

My conclusion? At almost \$90 list price for the tapes, I'll pass and wait for the laser release. Till then I'll content myself with my own TV tape, recorded in 1981, or my Japanese disc, despite the minor annoyance of subtitles. (What is the Japanese phrase for "Well, fiddle-dee-dee!?"?)

Kurt V. Rich
Houston, Tex.

I recently watched MGM/UA's VHS tape of *Gone with the Wind* and wondered if other viewers have noticed that from time to time frames are missing—indicated by a pause, where the previous frame seems to have been printed to cover the missing ones—while the Max Steiner score goes on. I can see the wisdom of this in such reconstructions as *A Star Is Born*, but this is the first time I have seen this occur in a film for which unbroken prints exist. In addition, the color seems to be overenhanced to the point where the reds bleed over. This faulty tran-

scription to tape would be more forgivable if the film in question were of lesser stature, and were being sold at a lower price and with less hubbub.

S.J. Kurtz
Seattle, Wash.

A spokesman for MGM/UA says the company will stand by its product. The company says that the rejection rate on its tapes is less than one-quarter of one percent, and complaints on GWTW have been no greater than on its other releases. Dissatisfied customers may arrange an exchange with the retailer from whom they bought the tapes. If that doesn't work out, they may write to MGM/UA (1350 Sixth Ave., N.Y.C. 10019). See "Quick Takes/Film" for Harvey Elliott's review of the laser transfer.

'Street'-wise

Two errors in Richard Jaccoma's otherwise splendid comparison of *Mean Streets* and *The Pope of Greenwich Village* ["Film Clips," June 1985] require correction. *Mean Streets* was not the first feature film Martin Scorsese directed but the third: it followed the extraordinary *Who's That Knocking at My Door* (1969) and *Boxcar Bertha* (1972). The latter is available on tape from Vestron. As for the visual quality of the *Mean Streets* tape, if interior and night scenes were murky, blame the transfer; most film prints of *Streets* render these scenes,

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Feedback

as intended, in gruesome detail.

Michael Bliss
Minneapolis, Minn.

Beta It's You

Do you expect to be carrying ads for baby strollers? Well, on a recent vacation to Disney World in Florida I saw a lot of VHS owners using baby strollers to carry cumbersome two-piece units around the park. Let's hear it for Betamovie! Once again a great idea from Sony goes unnoticed except for a few people (by far the minority) who were using the lightweight easy-to-carry Betamovie. Once again VHS will be following Beta's lead by selling a one-piece camcorder using the full-size VHS cassette, while Beta is going from bad to worse as reported in May's "Fast Forward," even with all its innovations. Too bad—for without the Beta system, how will VHS ever improve its system?

Robert B. Johnson
Niles, Ill.

May's "Fast Forward" column carried the news that Beta's share of VCR sales has dropped from 25.1 to 19.6 percent. I hardly find the decline surprising. There are two reasons for it. The first is that the Beta group has the most godawful marketing strategy—sloppy and spotty. The second reason is that the buying public just isn't very swift about VCRs. People buy their VCRs for all the wrong reasons. And they have lots of help from an equally doltish sales force which knows even less about the machines than their customers. And I'm being generous. Yes, Virginia, there are a lot more VHS machines out there—but numbers don't guarantee quality. By that reasoning the Chevy Vega would be a better car than a Rolls Royce. I prefer Beta because the picture is better and because I don't see the inside of a repair shop nearly as often with my Beta as my friends do with their more costly VHS units.

Kenneth R. Pangborn
Clearwater, Fla.

Up until now I have been undaunted by all the talk of Beta being phased out, but a recent experience has given me cause for concern. Always a video purist, I chose Beta when buying my first VCR because of the superior picture and scanning features. It wasn't long before I also bought a VHS because it was hard to find prerecorded Beta tapes. During the past year this situation has improved—one store I frequent stocks all new titles in both Beta and VHS—yet when I bought a Beta Hi-Fi unit and sold my old mono Beta to a friend, he said he couldn't find Beta rental tapes in his area and wanted to return the machine though it was in mint condition. My feeling has been that the advent of higher-resolution SuperBeta will give Beta a

shot in the arm. But regardless of what happens, I'll stick with my Beta. I bought it mainly to record broadcast programs anyway.

Richard A. Mather
Owings Mills, Md.

VHSC, See?

Richard Jaccoma's "What's New" [April 1985] expresses a biased opinion. He says, "No more VHSC cassettes—20-minute recording is a thing of the past." In response I would point out that VHSC is alive and well in the JVC VideoMovie, and if availability is any indication this unit is very popular. I assume JVC has no plans to junk VideoMovie. In addition, tests in VIDEO Magazine indicate that VideoMovie works well and that the 20-minute cassette is not a significant drawback. A better approach would have been for this article to say that the "VHS pack" now offers the consumer a choice: a larger, heavier camcorder that uses the full-size VHS cassette and offers longer recording time.

Robert Montgomery
Casper, Wyo.

Love It or Leave It

I just received the May 1985 issue. In a "Film Clips" review of *Birth of a Nation* M. George Stevenson refers to the movie as "a parable of anti-imperialism." The carpetbaggers are U.S. 'advisors,' the 'oppressed' Southerners are a nationalist liberation group" (hint, communists probably). What I want to know is, where do jerks like Stevenson get off dropping their poison into a supposedly technical magazine? Why do you not screen out anti-American venom? If you don't keep out trash like that, cancel my subscription. Why, it's just plain anti-American Eastern liberal garbage. Why don't you fire that jerk or make him read the *Washington Times* every day for a year? He might learn to appreciate the greatest country in the world.

Don Hoffman
Moss Beach, Calif.

The Name Game

I've subscribed to your fine magazine since the second issue—wouldn't be without it. Other readers must have this gripe: Why are movie titles allowed to change? I keep a record of films I view (more than 12,000 to date). It is so frustrating to start watching a movie and find after 10 or 15 minutes that I've already seen it under another name and consequently missed the beginning of another movie on a rival channel. There ought to be a law. Examples: *Honor Guard* equals *Wolf Lake*, *People Toys* equals *Devil Times Five*, *Jungle Heat* equals *Dance of the Dwarfs*, *Fistful of Dynamite* equals *Duck You Sucker*. I could easily list 100 more, but you get the idea.

Florence Frisbee
Huntington Beach, Calif.

Republicans

Is there any way I can find out if Republic Pictures plans video releases of any of the old movie serials of the '40s and '50s, such as Buster Crabbe playing Flash Gordon, Buck Rogers, Captain America, or Captain Marvel?

Bill Bradford
Cleveland, Ohio

The Republic video arm has just retaken the old company name, changing from NTA Home Entertainment to Republic Pictures Home Video (12636 Beatrice St., Box 66930, Los Angeles, Calif. 90066-0930; 213-306-4040).

Best & First

A "Videogram"/"Vidbits" item in the February 1985 issue refers to Continental as the first home-vid company to release two movies on a single tape. This is incorrect. Best Film & Video introduced our two "twin-pak" series, Bruce Le Theatre and Frightful Flicks, more than three years ago. Our Bruce Le Theatre series now offers six twin-paks (12 films) at \$49.95 each, and unlike other releases in this genre, ours are professionally produced with high-quality reproduction. The newest release in this series is *Bruce Is Loose* and *The Fierce One*, out since April. Our Frightful Flicks series offers five twin-paks (10 films) at \$59.95 per pak.

Arlene Winnick
Director of Public Relations
Best Film & Video
Great Neck, N.Y.

Eye Aye

Is it art? What about the "Mona Lisa," or the work of Picasso? Michelangelo had an eye for what we physically see, while Picasso was, well, in the twilight zone. But don't misunderstand me. There's nothing wrong with Picasso, if that's what you like. And that's the key to art. Having a working knowledge of computers, I know a computer doesn't sit around all day thinking about what great art it could create. No, it took people who knew the tools of their trade to produce the computer art you featured in "The Art of the Chip" [April 1985]. I'm not saying we have another master in our midst, but I enjoyed your portfolio. So let's give this some time to mature. I won't say which one I liked the most because I liked them all. And as far as I'm concerned, that's art.

Dennis Veatch
Denver, Colo.

VIDEO welcomes your comments and questions. Due to the volume of mail received, however, it is not possible to send personal replies; please do not include self-addressed envelopes with letters. All letters published may be edited for clarity and space. Address correspondence to **Feedback, VIDEO Magazine, 460 West 34th Street, New York, N.Y. 10001.**

Finally, a VHS that stacks up to our Beta.



Toshiba is pleased to announce that our Beta VCR finally has some real competition. Introducing the Toshiba VHS.

Toshiba's VHS offers the quality and features you've come to expect in our Beta, plus the convenience of the VHS format.

For example, our M-5400 VHS has four heads, just like our exceptional Beta. So you get superb playback picture quality in slow, still or search modes. The M-5400 also offers a 16-func-

tion wireless remote and one-touch time recording, as well as 4-event, 7-day programmability and 117-channel cable compatibility. In addition, its sleek, high-tech design makes it a pleasure to watch even when it's off.

And Toshiba offers a bigger selection of VHS and Beta models than anyone else in the business.

In fact, when it comes to VCR's, you'll find no one stacks up to Toshiba.

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For additional information, circle No. 6 on Reader Service Card.



Take these moments on videocassette

That's



Tap, jazz, ballet, breakin', soft-shoe, Latin. You name it, they dance it. From Astaire to Baryshnikov. From the merely dazzling to the gravitationally impossible. The famous, original scenes from the world's greatest musicals.† A July Release.

Musicals-for-a-Song Sale: Ask your video dealer for *Singin' In the Rain*, *Gigi* or any one of the ten all-time great MGM Musicals he's featuring for just \$29.95* each.

*Manufacturers suggested list price.

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home



THE NAKED FACE

Roger Moore bounds out of James Bond into a menacing, real world of terror based on Sidney Sheldon's novel. He's a rich doctor marked for murder. The motives are sinister, the mystery deep. With Rod Steiger and Elliott Gould. A July release.



MARIA'S LOVERS

Ivan (John Savage) survives the horrors of Japanese prison camp by dreaming of marrying sensuous Maria (Nastassja Kinski). When he comes home—and the dream comes true—prison camp nightmares and his competition for Maria nearly destroy him. A July release.



MRS. SOFFEL

A true story

Starring Mel Gibson and Diane Keaton—a real-life incident becomes one of the most gripping and torrid love stories ever told. He is sentenced to hang. She's the warden's wife. Can she help him escape? An August release.†



THE AVIATOR

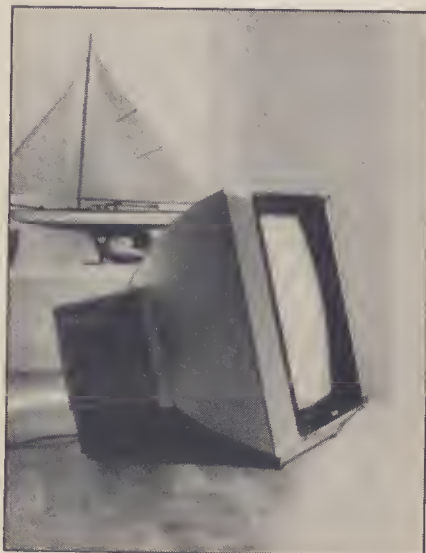
Christopher (Superman) Reeve stars as a pioneer airmail pilot of the '20s in this thrilling saga of a man who survives a tragic crash and regains his humanity with the help of a brave teenage passenger. An August release.†

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† VIDEOPHONIC[®] Stereo sound compatible with Beta Hi-Fi, VHS Hi-Fi and Stereo VHS.

For additional information, circle No. 7 on Reader Service Card.

New Products



Desperately Seeking Delta: Quasar's Monitor/Receiver

In a dramatic departure from its niche in the Matsushita family as Panasonic's kid brother, Quasar has introduced a sleek high-tech 26-inch monitor/receiver that can produce horizontal picture resolution of up to 420 lines with direct video input. Clearly aimed at affluent, sophisticated viewers, the Delta TT9000's most striking feature is its futuristic cabinet design: shaped like a picture tube, it can sit directly on the floor, its screen pointing upward at an angle of 10 degrees, straight at the face of a prototypical floorseated urban loft dweller. Styled in an unusual and subdued charcoal grey, Delta is television for the well-heeled bohemian.

Though designed for the 10-degree tilt, Delta can be angled to place the screen on a vertical plane using built-in adjusters. Mount the casters and you can also roll the set around your "space." Using an optional rack, Delta can be stacked atop a VCR, with or without optional external speakers supplanting the built-in ones at the sides, toward the back. Two racks are available: one preserving the floor-viewing concept and another that forms a pedestal, raising Delta up off the floor on behalf of the La-Z-Boy set. Quasar does not stress the latter option, however—"We are going to change the way people view television," threatens an

in-the-know spokesperson.

Matching style with substance, Delta's design includes a comb filter for optimum resolution suitable for TV, computer, or teletext use (up to 2000 characters displayable onscreen). It can tune 155 channels and includes an MTS decoder for stereo broadcast reception—which can be routed either through the system's built-in four-watt-per-channel amp or through an audio system for still better sound. The full-function wireless remote control can handle an optional VCR as well as the Delta monitor. The set provides three video inputs and dual RF inputs. Other features include "Channel Censor" (to stem the corruption of a high-tech child), audio controls (bass, treble, balance), onscreen function display, sleep timer, and channel check.

Price: \$1500; SW900 speakers, \$259.95/pair.

For additional information, circle No. 149 on Reader Service Card.

Son of 8mm: Meet Sony's 'Mini-8' & Tabletop VCR

Having just executed a perfect swan-dive into the 8mm video format with its CCD-V8 "Video 8" camcorder, Sony is still hellbent on making waves. The company has introduced two new 8mm products: a "Mini-8" camcorder that is half the size of "Video 8," and the first tabletop 8mm VCR. The latter is the first 8mm product to live up to the format specifications' promise of digital sound as well as the first Sony 8mm product to include the slow speed.

The CCD-M8U "Mini-8" camcorder is the size of a super-8 film-based movie camera or a fat paperback book; its projecting parts can be removed and the whole thing packed into a slim briefcase. Without tape or battery it weighs slightly more than two pounds. Using a solid-state CCD (charge coupled device) image sensor and optical viewfinder, the M8U produces pictures in low-light conditions down to 25 lux (not a remarkable spec, but this unit's size still makes it a unique machine). Also provided are a two-position switch for white balance and a three-position switch for focus range with the f1.6 multipoint zone-focus lens. The camcorder is sold in a package with a portable 8mm recorder/player,



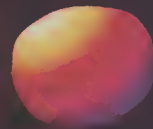
Sony CCD-M8U and EV-C8U

model EV-C8U—again about the size of a paperback dictionary. The recorder accepts input from an optional tuner or other video sources, and with a mini-monitor (not sold in the package) it can be used to play back camcorder footage in the field. It plays back at both the SP and LP speeds, but records only in SP.

The EV-S700U is the first tabletop 8mm VCR from Sony or anyone else. Switched into LP mode, it can record four hours of video and audio using a two-hour 8mm cassette. The S700U is the first 8mm product to provide digital PCM (pulse code modulation) audio—in fact, it can accommodate up to six separate PCM stereo soundtracks for a total recording time of 24 hours on a two-hour tape at the LP speed (audio only). However, the bit-sampling system limits frequency response to 20-15kHz (high frequencies on most audio amps and receivers extend out to at least 20kHz). The S700U can also record mono AFM hi-fi audio. The built-in tuner/timer tunes Channels 2-13 (VHF), 14-69 (UHF), and 1-125 (cable) and can record six programs over three weeks. The VCR comes with a wireless remote control.

Prices: CCD-M8U & EV-C8U "Mini-8" system, \$1800 (with accessories); EV-S700U home deck, \$1500. At presstime Sony said the units will be available "in the fall of this year."

For additional information, circle No. 150 on Reader Service Card.



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For additional information, circle No. 8 on Reader Service Card.



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Behold a new world of color
made for the increasingly demanding
tastes of a new video age.

The words radiant, vivid, vibrant

and bold come to mind, but even
they don't do Scotch™ EXG
videocassettes justice. Thanks to
advances in computer monitoring

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EXG VIDEOCASSETTE.

and laser testing we have come up
with a tape so reliable
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you've imagined. But as you've never
really seen
color before.

WORLD WATCHES

ScotchTM
VIDEOCASSETTES

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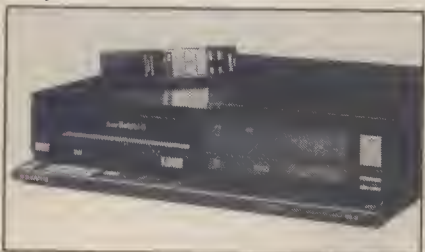
New Products

Sanyo Enters SuperBeta With Hi-Fi VCR & Camcorder

Sanyo—the biggest maker and seller of Beta VCRs in the U.S.—has announced its entry into SuperBeta with a VCR and camcorder. SuperBeta is the Beta format's extension of picture resolution for a 20 percent gain in overall sharpness, making Beta the sharpest VCR format (ahead of VHS and 8mm) and the second-sharpest video format in general (after the LaserVision video-disc format).



Sanyo VRC500



Sanyo VCR 7250

The VCR 7250 is also a Beta Hi-Fi unit. It comes with a 105-channel tuner and 11-day/8-event timer as well as BetaScan picture search, still frame, auto rewind, and wireless remote control. Also available is the VRC500 Betamovie camcorder, which can shoot pictures in either Beta or SuperBeta (just as the VCR 7250 can play back either Beta or SuperBeta tapes). The camcorder's CCD solid-state image sensor eliminates image lag and the other vices of tube-type cameras, and the VRC500's other features include auto focus with an infrared sensing circuit.

Prices: VCR 7250, \$679.95; VRC500, \$1599.95.

For additional information,
circle No. 151 on Reader Service Card.

Zenith Adds Auto Focus To VHSC Camcorder

Zenith has added auto focus to its VideoMovie camcorder. The new model, VM6100, follows last year's introduction of the VM6000. Both use the VHSC subformat, which takes a 20-minute TC-20 VHS minicassette—about the size of an 8mm cassette, though the two are not compatible.

The 4.6-pound VM6100 has both an auto-focus mode and a feature called Touch Focus, which allows instant automatic focusing at the touch of a button

when the camcorder is in manual-focus mode. The Saticon pickup tube picks up low-light images down to 15 lux. Other features include 6X power-zoom lens, auto white balance, and auto iris.

Price: \$1549.



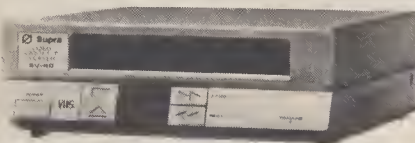
For additional information,
circle No. 152 on Reader Service Card.

Supra Sells VHS Players Plus a VHS Recorder

Supra is a VHS manufacturer with a difference: it has made its name with videocassette *players*, although it has also recently introduced a recorder as well.

Selling for the same price, the Supra SV-70 (black) and SV-40 (silver) players are stripped-down front loaders with play, fast forward, rewind, stop, eject, and little else. The SV-70 also has a four-digit mechanical counter and an LED to indicate excessive dew levels, while the SV-40 has a front-panel thumb-wheel for tracking and large illuminated legends for tape-transport functions, including a one-piece stop/eject button. A portable model, SV-7, works from a 12-volt car cigarette-lighter socket (it's recommended for limos, among other uses). The recorder is the SV-18, a full-function 105 channel unit.

Prices: SV-70, SV-40: \$279.95; SV-7, n.a.; SV-18, \$369.95.



Supra SV-40



Supra SV-18

For additional information,
circle No. 153 on Reader Service Card.

13-Inch Sony Trinitrons Have 'Mirrorblack' Tube

A new type of "Mirrorblack" picture tube is what distinguishes three new 13-inch entries in the Sony Trinitron TV line from their predecessors. The Mirrorblack screen absorbs more light than it reflects—giving the new models a contrast ratio (deeper blacks and brighter light areas) 50 percent greater than conventional TVs, according to the manufacturer.



Sony KV-1370R

All three models have cable-compatible 181-channel random-access tuning including 125 cable frequencies. Model KV-1371R also has a front-mounted Home Interface Terminal (HIT) for easy connection of video games or computers without any need to disconnect the antenna from the set's back. The HIT terminal also accepts a pay-TV signal from a cable converter box, accessible from the supplied remote control.

The KV-1371R is available in Brazilian vinyl-clad rosewood. The KV-1370R comes in silver metallic leatherette and white, while the KV-1365 is available in either Brazilian-rosewood or silver-metallic finishes; both of the latter are designed as compact upright sets with a flat square appearance.

Prices: KV-1371R, \$449.95; KV-1370R, \$419.95; KV-1365, \$369.95.

For additional information,
circle No. 154 on Reader Service Card.

Panasonic 'Outsider' TVs Include 3 B&W Models

Model TRG-535T is one of three five-inch black & white TVs in the Outsider line from Panasonic. Touch a spring-loaded button and the screen pops up smoothly and slowly into viewing position. Closing the cabinet turns the unit into a compact rectangular solid for use as a tabletop AM/FM radio. Other features include auto voltage regulation, AC adapter, antenna matching unit, rechargeable Panaloid batteries, and ear-phone jack.

The other combo TV/radio in the Outsider series is the TRG-523T, which can

S M A L L

RCA BRINGS IT ALL INTO FOCUS

THE SMALL WONDER, AMERICA'S #1 VIDEO CAMERA,
NOW HAS AUTO-FOCUS AND INCREASED LOW-LIGHT CAPABILITY.

Last year, RCA's Small Wonder Camera took the video world by storm. And no wonder—its combination of compact size and special features was unmatched! This year's model, believe it or not, is even better. We've added an improved, solid state imager, auto-focus and 10 lux low light capability to Small Wonder's other remarkable features.* Like

automatic white balance, instant review, power zoom and an amazing weight of 2.2 lbs. Of course the Small Wonder will still attach to most any VHS-VCR, portable or table model. And it's still a palm-sized piece of precision equipment. Add it all up, and the Small Wonder's differences are clear, very clear. *10 lux capability at 25 IRE.



RCA

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W O N D E R

For additional information, circle No. 10 on Reader Service Card.

NEW from Velbon introducing the new DPK® V-Series tripods for Video.

The Victory-460, designed for today's photographic needs. The lighter weight V-460 Video tripod is an all black "DPK" sealed leg design. Durable, stable and stronger, the V-460 features center braced legs with a friction adjustable geared center column and a 2-way spring counter balanced panhead. This professional looking tripod will help your home video production with smooth and continuous pans and tilts.

Consider DL-10 tripod dolly as an added accessory for a total Video system for home productions. Ask your Video dealer about new Velbon's outstanding line of new "DPK" tripods and our Video accessories.

For further information, contact Velbon International Corporation, 2433 Moreton Street, Torrance, Calif. 90505 (213) 326-7902

Velbon
TRIPOD

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Panasonic TRG-535T

operate on AC, dry-cell or rechargeable batteries, or car battery. Like the TRG-521T (with no radio), it provides about six hours of viewing on four D dry cells.

Prices: TRG-535T, \$199; TRG-523T, \$159; TRG-521T, \$139.

For additional information,
circle No. 155 on Reader Service Card.

Sansui Brings Out Another Unusual Audio/Video Box

The higher-tech-than-thou device pictured is not the control panel for the Strategic Air Command but a new audio/video signal processor from Sansui. The AV-99 is the successor to Sansui's AV-77, which in turn was one of the more unusual signal processors introduced last year.

The two most well-considered sets of controls are for wipes and color correction. The Wipe section offers a selection of up to 23 different patterns using six large pushbuttons with graphic legends. A joystick controls wipe position, and large sliders—one for horizontal, one for vertical—open and close the wipe patterns.



Also offering a joystick control is the Color-Corrector section. Its background-color generator can produce up to eight colors (white, black, yellow, cyan, green, magenta, red, blue) as well as a full color-bar pattern, to check color balance. The joystick manipulates color balance among three basic positions (red, green, blue), while each of the eight colors mentioned above has its own color-coded pushbutton. A slide control varies color intensity from dark to light.

Other functions—all involving a combination of slide controls and pushbuttons—include Video Art ("solarization" and polarization), AV Auto Fader, Enhancer (with an extra button for Noise Cut), Sound Mixing (between the Video soundtrack and an external Audio track for overdubbing), and Mic Mixing (between Mic and an external audio Source). The array of selector buttons

are labeled VCR-A (dubbing from A to B), VCR-B (B to A), Camera (camera to A/B), and Audio. An LCD (liquid crystal display) tape counter rounds out the package.

Price: \$500.

For additional information,
circle No. 156 on Reader Service Card.

JVC Audio/Video Processor Handles 1 or 2 Sources

The JX-C7 is an audio/video black box from JVC. It contains several features for processing signals from one or two audio/video sources.

From the left, the controls begin with a Power button and two Source pushbuttons. Next is an Audio Mix control, a knob that blends signals from Source and Ext(ernal). The next three controls are arranged with Audio Output and Video Output (for fade to silence or black) flanking a single Main Output control combining both. The Enhancer circuit is controlled by an on/off pushbutton and Min/Max knob; a double-delay-line system circuit and switchable noise filter prevent picture deterioration during dubbing or editing. A Color (intensity) control uses both a Light/Dark knob and an on/off pushbutton, the latter also working with a Color Balance joystick control with positions for R (red), G (green), and B (blue). Jacks for Mic and Phones also are provided and headphone volume can be adjusted with a Min/Max control.

Price: \$350.



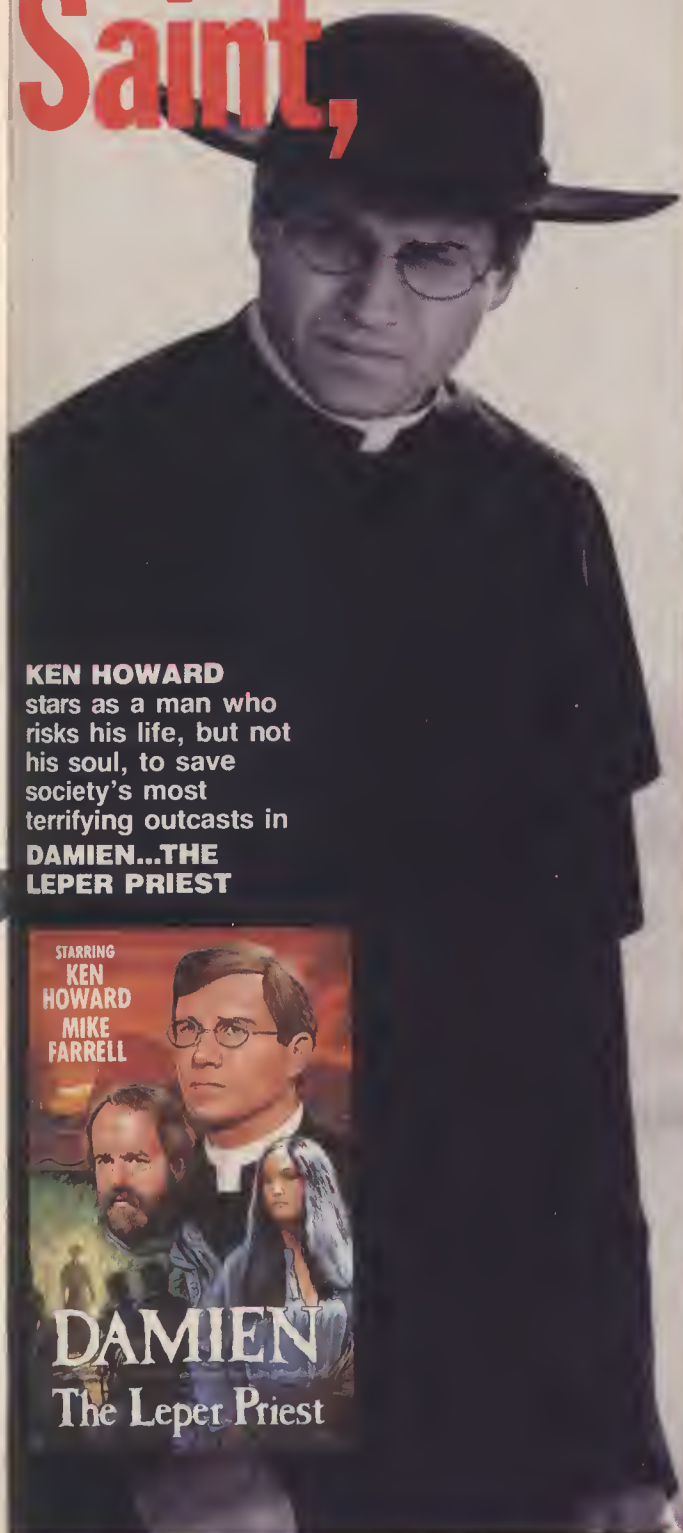
For additional information,
circle No. 157 on Reader Service Card.

Sony WatchCam Is B&W Home-Security System

What do you get when you add a compact black & white surveillance camera to a four-inch black & white Sony Watchman? The answer is WatchCam, Sony's response to the need for a reasonably priced home-security system.



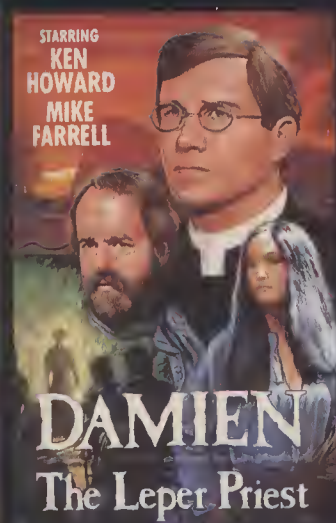
One Saint,



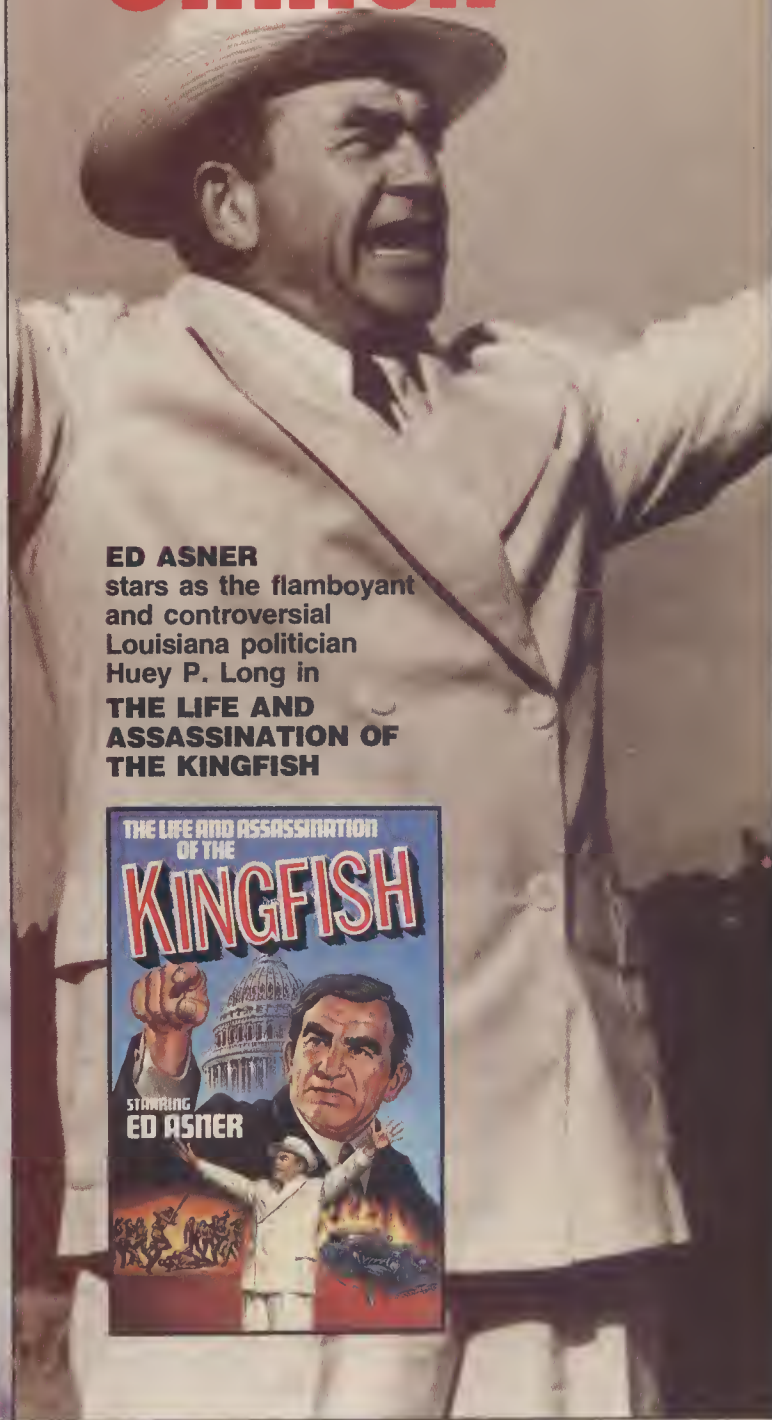
KEN HOWARD

stars as a man who risks his life, but not his soul, to save society's most terrifying outcasts in

DAMIEN...THE LEPER PRIEST



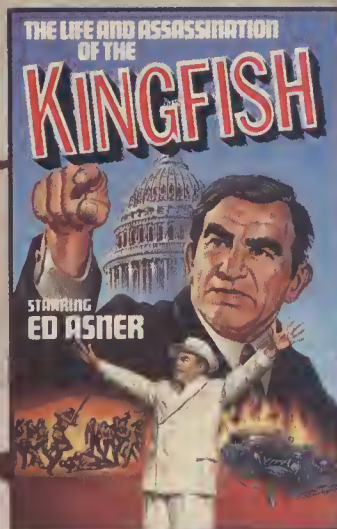
One Sinner.



ED ASNER

stars as the flamboyant and controversial Louisiana politician Huey P. Long in

THE LIFE AND ASSASSINATION OF THE KINGFISH



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For additional information, circle No. 12 on Reader Service Card.

New Products

The product was inspired when Sony brought out its first Watchman units and the home-security industry beat a path to Sony's door, asking about using the flat-tube technology for closed-circuit security applications.

The camera uses a Saticon pickup tube that can produce images in low light down to five lux. The six-ounce camera mounts into a standard door peephole to show who's on the other side, though mounting brackets can also adapt it to monitor a child's playroom or crib from

up to 200 feet away using optional extension cables. The system will be sold through regular Sony dealers as well as security-system firms, building contractors, and rec-vehicle contractors.

Price: \$499.95.

*For additional information,
circle No. 158 on Reader Service Card.*

Gusdorf Video Cabinet Swivels at the Base

What makes Gusdorf's 5535 video cabinet different from other video cabi-

nets? It swivels at the base, so you can optimize the viewing angle from any part of the room.

The 5535 also partakes of a heartening trend among video-furniture manufacturers: it eschews the cheap-looking synthetic finishes of too many furniture makers in favor of what the manufacturer describes as a "lustrous oak surface," with sculpted round corners which carry over into other parts of the Gusdorf line.



A top shelf pulls out to provide access to top-loading VCRs, while the shelf below the TV can take other miscellaneous items. Below that, at the very bottom, is a drawer for accessories or (with an optional organizer) videocassettes. (We do not recommend storing cassettes on the shelves—they're too near the TV, as shown in the photo.) Rear ventilation panels and wiring ports are not shown in the photo. The unit measures 45-1/4 inches high by 27 wide by 15-3/4 deep.

Price: \$169.95.

*For additional information,
circle No. 159 on Reader Service Card.*

VDO-Pak Car Cord Is Good for 24 VCR Models

VDO-Pak's new car cord operates with 24 current-model portable VCRs. The CLM-11 consists of a cigarette-lighter adapter and cord with a section that replaces the portable's own battery. With a built-in three-amp negative ground fuse and six-foot cable for protection and mobility, the CLM-11 works with the following VCR models: Panasonic 5800, 8110, 8484, 8500, 9600; Magnavox 8474, 8475; J.C. Penney 5110, 5115; Canon 30A; Sylvania 4525, 4540; GE 5022, 5024, 5026, 5028; Olympus 105, 106; Philco 1728; and Quasar 5440, 5442, 5740, 5747.

Price: \$21.95.

*For additional information,
circle No. 160 on Reader Service Card.*

Cool, Uniform, Color Perfect Lighting

Mini-Cool Heat-Free Video Light

Selected by
NASA

- Dramatically improves camera color performance
- Enriches color brilliance
- Quartz-halogen lamp
- Entirely portable
- 2 mounts standard equipment
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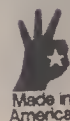
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For additional information, circle No. 64 on Reader Service Card



SONY TAPE. PERFECT PITCH. PERFECT PICTURE.

Today's ultra sensitive equipment demands a high grade quality tape to capture every color and every sound.

That's why Sony developed its Ultra High Grade Hi-Fi videotape.

And because it is Sony, it goes without looking that the picture will be perfect rich in color and resolution.

For example, our high magnetic particle density means you get a video and RF output performance that doubles our standard grade.

From the delicate llutes of "Swan Lake" to the driving decibels of MTV, Sony UHG has the dynamic range and frequency response to take it all in.

Then dish it out with realism surpassing even reel-to-reel decks.

In addition, we back coat each cassette with black carbon so that the tape runs smoother, with fewer drop-outs and will last longer with less wear on your VCR.

And in order to maximize the reception of ever-improving TV signals, Sony UHG tape with greater audio and video S/N ratios is a must for picture perfect pictures and picture perfect pitch.

All in all, no one knows more about broadcasting a signal, playing it at home and recording it for keeps than Sony.

New Sony UHG Hi-Fi video cassettes. It's music to your ears. And your eyes.



Fine Tuning

Your Video Questions Answered

by Roderick Woodcock

VU & vu

Q I've noticed that the level of the sound coming from different cable channels varies a lot. On some channels the audio is low, while on others it almost blares, even while the volume control of my TV remains at the same setting. What causes these variations and is there any way of equalizing the levels? I'm tired of constantly popping up from my easy chair to fiddle with the volume control on my TV.

James Bartles
Los Angeles, Calif.

A Many cable systems suffer from this malady. The problem originates at the cable companies' "head end," the site where all the signals are received (many from satellites) and retransmitted to subscribers. Ideally, any variations in the levels of the audio signals being transmitted by the various services should be adjusted here, and with proper equipment and maintenance by cable-company personnel, it could be. Phone your cable company and complain about the discrepancies in volume. But don't hold your breath for an instant cure. Think about investing in a TV or accessory converter box that gives you the option of remote volume control.

Mutations

Q Since I work a variety of irregular shifts, I sometimes find myself watching videotaped TV shows late at night or early in the morning. Occasionally I will use a set of headphones so that the volume won't disturb the rest of the family. I've noticed a curious effect, though. Listening carefully to the audio coming through the headphones I can hear faint but speeded-up background audio when scanning through the tapes. But when listening to the audio through the TV speaker, I can't hear any audio during the scan mode. Is there any way of amplifying it?

Richard Nieman
Portland, Ore.

A The audio you've noticed during the scan mode is always on the tape. But during visible picture search most consumer VCRs activate a circuit that turns off or "mutes" the volume. This is not necessary, of course, and you won't find it on many industrial VCRs which keep the audio at listening level when searching through a tape. But manufacturers of consumer decks are more concerned with the reactions of the home user. Since the audio is high-pitched and distorted in the search mode, they feel most consumers would prefer not to hear it during special-effects modes like picture search.

There are some exceptions. On many Beta Hi-Fi VCRs the audio remains unmuted in the double-speed mode, providing a fast but intelligible audio that can be used for speed viewing and speed listening. But these

machines still mute out the audio for other modes, like picture search. On the other hand, some VHS Hi-Fi decks, which could offer an equivalent double-speed audio feature, don't have it. You could obtain it by having a technician disconnect the audio muting circuit. However, this would disconnect all audio muting including the more disquieting screech that accompanies an unmuted scan mode.

There is little advantage to unmuting the audio on a non-Hi-Fi VCR (or one that doesn't offer double speed) since the results would be high-pitched and unintelligible. There are ways around this dilemma, however, and with the right hardware some interesting effects can be obtained. For more information see the June 1983 "TV Den."

The Union Label

Q Having enjoyed video as a hobby for almost seven years, I have acquired many different brands of tapes for my collection. I'd like to find some blank (preferably removable) white label strips to standardize all the titles in my inventory. I've checked stationery stores and several video outlets but have had no luck. Doesn't anyone manufacture plain white VHS labels?

Joe Campbell
Birmingham, Ala.

A After I published a similar letter on labeling last year, a reader mailed me a sample of Avery's #5255 removable labels which I have used ever since. This label is

really intended for the spine of audio-cassette boxes and is four inches long and 9/16-inch wide. This makes it smaller than the spine area of a standard Beta or VHS cassette, but just right for the new 8mm cassette boxes (although it's too large for the 8mm cassette spine itself). These labels are available from stationery stores, but aren't usually stocked on a regular basis, so you'll have to quote the catalogue number and have them ordered. At this point, Avery doesn't have any labels specifically designed for Beta and VHS cassettes, but some come close to the necessary dimensions.

Another source is Audico (219 Crossen Ave., Elk Grove, Ill. 60007; 312-640-1030). The firm has recently introduced a new line of labels for U-Matic, VHS, and Beta cassettes in sand parchment, pewter parchment, and matte white finishes. Label dimensions are 2-1/2 by 2-3/4 inches for Beta and 3-1/16 by 1-7/8 for VHS—ideal for the label area on top of the cassettes. Audico does not have special spine labels however.

Still another alternative is to buy some 8-1/2 by 11-inch sheets of white labels (with removable adhesive) and cut the material into the size you want. Avery and Denison both make these labels which are intended for plain-paper copying machines. Since I've recently acquired a copying machine of my own (yup, Jack Klugman con-

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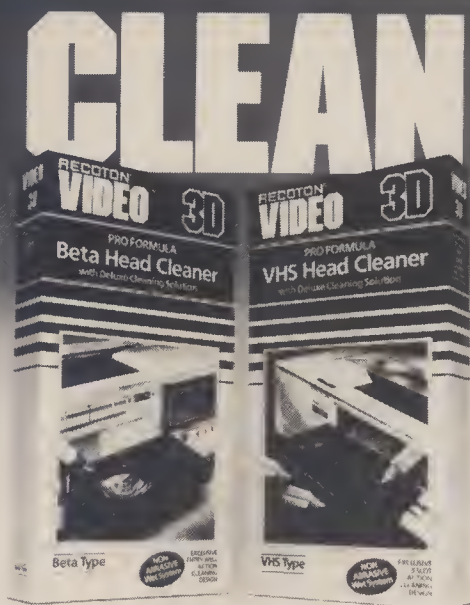
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Fine Tuning

vinced me), I've started to manufacture my own customized labels for some cassettes, photocopying titles and plot descriptions from various sources onto the adhesive label. The cassettes look great. Look for a more detailed column on this subject in an upcoming issue.

Reading Around

Q Enclosed is a copy of an article that appeared in another magazine in July 1983. It states that Sony had already introduced a new portable VCR in Japan called the SL-B5 and that the B5 "family" of mini-Betas was to be sold in the U.S. at the end of 1983. It's 1985 and I haven't seen it yet. I've asked around in a few electronic stores in my area and no one knows anything about it. Will Sony sell this product in the U.S., and if so, when?

Carlos Martinez
Miami, Fla.

A The story you read (written by Murray Slovick, who also writes for us) appeared in a video magazine published primarily for the video dealer, not the general public. (I read everything about video I can get my hands on—including Japanese and European video magazines—just to keep up-to-date on new product trends.)

But when reading what are essentially "trade" magazines, keep in mind that the information they contain often precedes the time some products are made available in the U.S. In this case, the story correctly reported that a smaller successor of Sony's SL-2000, the SL-B5, had been introduced in Japan under the Sony name, with similar products available from NEC, Toshiba, and Sanyo. But of these, only the Toshiba version ever made it to the U.S., in the form of the now-discontinued V-X34 portable.

The Tipoff: Video Limbo

Q I own a Sony SL-5400 which is now about five years old. I've had it serviced every 18 months or so. A couple of months ago I started getting white horizontal lines while viewing tapes, which got worse with time. I took the VCR in for service and was told I needed new heads. Since the set was getting old and had seen much use, I decided against it. The puzzling part is that I've found the VCR will still record a good signal—but won't play it back. I'm still using the 5400 to tape shows which I play back on another, newer Beta deck. Does the same head record and play back? And if the heads really are the problem, shouldn't the record function be affected?

Henry Neratka
Toms River, N.J.

A The 5400 has only two video heads, which are used to record and play back the signal. However, when the VCR's recording, it applies a higher current to the heads than when simply play-

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ROMANCING THE STONE	0894092	YENTL	0895082	A DAY AT THE RACES	2502092
ROBIN HOOD (Walt Disney)	5299092	THE LONGEST DAY	0577032	A FISTFUL OF DOLLARS	0553012
CASABLANCA	0507082	DIRTY HARRY	6017082	MUTINY ON THE BOUNTY (1935)	2562062
SPLASH	5304022	CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND—Special Edition	1510012	NOTORIOUS	0567132
STAR WARS	0564162	RED RIVER	7507032	THE PHILADELPHIA STORY	2503082
JANE FONDA'S WORKOUT CHALLENGE	5260042	KARATE KID	1710092	SOME LIKE IT HOT	0584042
THE BIG CHILL	1527022	TIGHTROPE	6051052	THE PRODUCERS	3109042
TOOTIE	1509042	BODY DOUBLE	1713062	THE ABSENT MINDEED PROFESSOR	5271012
POLICE ACADEMY	6049002	NATIONAL LAMPOON'S VACATION	6039022	WITNESS FOR THE PROSECUTION	0717122
GREYSTOKE—The Legend of Tarzan, Lord of the Apes	6045042	BACHELOR PARTY	0926012	THE WAY WE WERE	1529002
COUNTRY	5341072	THE ROAD WARRIOR	6028052	THE SEVEN SAMURAI	3108052
UMBO	5251052	ANNIE	1516052	ONCE UPON A TIME IN AMERICA (uncut)	6058082
WARGAMES	0828002	BUTCH CASSIDY & THE SUNDANCE KID	0517302	BLADE RUNNER	3104092
THE NATURAL	1649052	THE MALTESE FALCON	0508072	THE BROTHER FROM ANOTHER PLANET	7568092
RISKY BUSINESS	6033082	LAWRENCE OF ARABIA	1514072	THE LADY FROM SHANGHAI	1720012
AFRICAN QUEEN	0511022	MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS	2529082	ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK	3113082
STRIPES	1513082	PORKY'S	0775112	THE GRADUATE	3103002
FUNNY GIRL	1511002	THE SOUND OF MUSIC	0039212	FANNY AND ALEXANDER	3112092
OCTOPUSSY	0856052			THE RULING CLASS	3117042
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Fine Tuning

ing back. Since video heads actually stick out slightly from the surface of the drum or scanner and penetrate the surface of the tape slightly, it's possible for a set of heads to wear down to a point where there is enough "tip protrusion" for adequate recording (augmented by the higher recording current) and still not be able to recover enough signal for a good playback picture. Call it a sort of "video limbo." What you've got, then, is half a VCR: good for recording, but not good enough for playback, at least not on the same VCR. With even more use, eventually the heads will wear down to the point where you won't even be able to record with them. Until then, get as much mileage from the machine as you can.

Channel Change

Q While virtually every VCR that's now available on the market includes an RF modulator that broadcasts on either channel 3 or 4, what can you do if the area you live in is so crowded with overlapping TV signals that neither channel provides a clear picture? Can you replace the RF modulator with one that broadcasts over another channel?

Tom Hoover
Buffalo, N.Y.

A RF modulators that broadcast on channels 5 or 6 are available for some brands of 3/4-inch videocassette recorders, but to my knowledge all domestic consumer and industrial Beta and VHS VCRs confine their RF outputs to either channel 3 or 4.

If RF interference is a problem for you, why not just invest in a good monitor/receiver equipped with direct audio/video input jacks? That would eliminate the interference you're now experiencing and improve the quality of the audio and video you're seeing to boot. If that alternative is too expensive, you might check the local yellow pages for an industrial video dealer who stocks an optional RF modulator that can accept audio and video signals and rebroadcast them over a channel other than 3 or 4.

It's Broke

Q I have a Panasonic PV-1730 VHS Hi-Fi VCR. I'm puzzled by one of the recorder's features. Whenever I program the timer to record from 11:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. the recorder turns off at 11:59 p.m. I have been unable to find out from Panasonic why this VCR does this. Maybe they will tell you.

Lenda Randle
Decatur, Ga.

A Your machine obviously has some sort of fault in the timer circuitry. Sorry that you've been having problems with Panasonic, but since there's a problem with your timer, you're going to have to deal with the firm anyway—just to get the timer fixed.

Is this what they mean by driver's education?

Well, it all depends on how you look at it. And from Jonathan's point of view, driver's education has nothing to do with driving.

But it has a lot to do with a red Studebaker. A beautiful girl named Marilyn. And going places where Johnathan's never been before.

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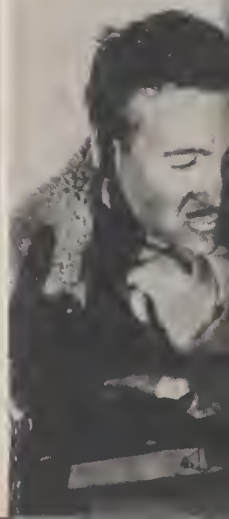
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Videogram

The Electronic Intelligencer

by William Wolfe

Video with Anchovies

In California, kids are going from Little League to the big screen. Shakey's, the pizza franchise, is bringing in herds of customers by videotaping local sandlot games and showing them on 45-inch TVs in the restaurant.

"We're the biggest videotaping restaurant in the country," says Harold Veum, manager of Shakey's in Sunnymead. "Actually, we're the only one. Our competitors tried to imitate us, but they had to stop—the quality just didn't make it." It all started



out as a community service, according to Veum. "These days, both parents work—so they can't see their kids play

ball. We videotape the games for free, and no one is pressured to buy anything. But they usually do." Veum esti-

mates that each tape costs Shakey's about \$50 to produce, but the 60 or so people who turn up to watch spend from \$200 to \$300.

"Overwhelming success" might not do justice to Veum's brainchild. "Business is up 50 percent," he says. "We're building a new Shakey's 2 miles from here just to accommodate the overflow." The original idea has grown too. 40 Shakey's are now recording local happenings in their communities and in Sunnymead, Veum's two crews are taping bowling leagues, track meets, and aerobics classes.

"It's amazing," Veum says. "People like to eat pizza and watch themselves jump around in leotards."

Room with a View

It's not every day that an 18-year-old gets his work shown in New York's Museum of Modern Art. Yet there it was among the Monets, Rousseaus, and Dalis: *The New Coffee Generation*, a 9-minute antiwar video.

Generation brought Christian Souza the Grand Prize in the 1984 Visions of U.S. video contest. The 1985 contest, sponsored by Sony and The Movie Channel and administered by the American Film Institute, is in full swing. Amateur videographers have until August 15 to enter.

Videos must be original noncommercial tapes recorded in VHS, Beta, and 8mm; no more than 30 minutes in length; and must fall within a fiction, nonfiction, experimental, or music video category. Prizes, including a complete Sony Beta Hi-Fi system, will be awarded by celeb judges Francis Coppola, Gene Shalit, and Kenny Loggins, among others. For

entry forms or information phone the festival committee at 213-856-7745.

D.C. Outlet

Who says you can't take it with you? Tired of coming back from business trips with only dim memories of the places he'd visited, record producer Stephen J. Nicholas came up with "video postcards"—a series of longform music videos designed to capture the sights, sounds, and spirit of the world's great cities. *Washington, D.C.* (30 min., \$29.95) is Nicholas' first "VP."

"The most impressive part," says Nicholas, "is the sequence at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Using an Ambisonics four-channel mic, we bring Huey helicopters right in over your head. It's the same technology Pink Floyd used on *The Wall*, but they didn't know how to use it—we do. It's very moving." The music—from string and brass quartets to computer technopop and full orches-

tra—was penned by Michael Louis, who writes for Julio Iglesias and Willie Nelson ("he's got a hundred gold records"), and the recording is fully digital.

"It's really from a music standpoint," Nicholas adds. "When I played it for a friend he said, 'Wait a minute—where's the narrator?' But this isn't a travelogue. We don't tell you to stay in the

Marriott. We want to convey the feeling of being there, what it's all about."

Depending on what video buyers think *D.C.* is all about, Nicholas should make good on his promise of an August release for video postcards on New York, San Francisco, Chicago, and New Orleans, with 10 other American cities and European capitals to come in summer '86.



Vietnam Memorial in 'D.C.' VP: 'Where's the narrator?'

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computer
ENTERTAINMENT

Illustrations by Norm Bendell

N.Y.-area Creditron: Movies 24 hours a day, for 97 cents.

Creditron is about the size of a Coke (or Pepsi) vending machine. Inside there's room for 168 VHS or Beta (or blank) tapes—the average is about 45 different titles, with 3 or 4 of each. Shoppers insert a charge card, select and receive a tape using pushbuttons, and take a receipt.

Each tape is bar-coded, so when you return it—into the return drawer of any Creditron machine—the code is read, your charge computed, and the transaction finalized. If you don't return the tape your account is billed the full retail price. If you make a mistake and get a tape you don't want, you have 10 minutes to return it—no charge.

Poster Children

Missing children are a *cause celebre* for home-video companies. Now Playhouse Video, the kidvid outfit formed by CBS/Fox Video, will send a poster of four

Richie, Jackson, Bruce Springsteen, and Ray Charles (the showstopper). Proceeds will be donated to USA for Africa. (See Frank Lovece's review in "Quick Takes/Video.")

New World Home Video has its "first original outside acquisition." Sound important? It is. *The Female Impersonator Pageant* has 30 female impersonators vying for the coveted title of Fe-

lica, and Ironman. Marvel villains also get their day on tape—doing grim deeds are the likes of Mole Man, the Green Goblin, and Doctor Octopus. The hour-long tapes are due out mid-September, and will list at \$19.95. Prism could've called it the "Marvel Comics Rerun Library," though—all the cartoons were originally produced for the networks or syndication.

ments—with an executive.

They twisted my arm—Devotees of professional wrestling will be delighted to learn that Coliseum Video has issued the rather whimsically titled *Wrestlemania*. Appearing are paragons of fashion Liberace and Cyndi Lauper, "Gentleman" Billy Martin, film idol Fred (*My Breakfast with*) Blassie, and—of course—Hulk Hogan and Mr. T.

missing children to 24,000 retail video stores every 60 days. Playhouse Vice President Vince Larinto said, "If we find one child, reunite one family, we shall have accomplished something we can remember all of our lives."

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UNITED STATES**Room with a View**

It's not every day that an 18-year-old gets his work shown in New York's Museum of Modern Art. Yet there it was among the Monets, Rousseaus, and Dalis: *The New Coffee Generation*, a 9-minute antiwar video.

Generation brought Christian Souza the Grand Prize in the 1984 Visions of U.S. video contest. The 1985 contest, sponsored by Sony and The Movie Channel and administered by the American Film Institute, is in full swing. Amateur videographers have until August 15 to enter.

Videos must be original noncommercial tapes recorded in VHS, Beta, and 8mm; no more than 30 minutes in length; and must fall within a fiction, nonfiction, experimental, or music video category. Prizes, including a complete Sony Beta Hi-Fi system, will be awarded by celeb judges Francis Coppola, Gene Shalit, and Kenny Loggins, among others. For

entry forms or information phone the festival committee at 213-856-7745.

D.C. Outlet

Who says you can't take it with you? Tired of coming back from business trips with only dim memories of the places he'd visited, record producer Stephen J. Nicholas came up with "video postcards"—a series of longform music videos designed to capture the sights, sounds, and spirit of the world's great cities. *Washington, D.C.* (30 min., \$29.95) is Nicholas' first "VP."

"The most impressive part," says Nicholas, "is the sequence at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Using an Ambisonics four-channel mic, we bring Huey helicopters right in over your head. It's the same technology Pink Floyd used on *The Wall*, but they didn't know how to use it—we do. It's very moving." The music—from string and brass quartets to computer technopop and full orches-

tra—was penned by Michael Louis, who writes for Julio Iglesias and Willie Nelson ("he's got a hundred gold records"), and the recording is fully digital.

"It's really from a music standpoint," Nicholas adds. "When I played it for a friend he said, 'Wait a minute—where's the narrator?' But this isn't a travelogue. We don't tell you to stay in the

Marriott. We want to convey the feeling of being there, what it's all about."

Depending on what video buyers think *D.C.* is all about, Nicholas should make good on his promise of an August release for video postcards on New York, San Francisco, Chicago, and New Orleans, with 10 other American cities and European capitals to come in summer '86.



Vietnam Memorial in 'D.C.' VP: 'Where's the narrator?'

A Tape and a Smile

It's 10 p.m. and you have a sudden urge to see Ricardo Montalban in *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*. If you live near a store that has a Creditron video vending machine, you can—and for a reasonable 97 cents.

We're not talking video stores here—Creditrons are showing up in corner convenience stores, all-night 7-11s, even a Vermont fish store.



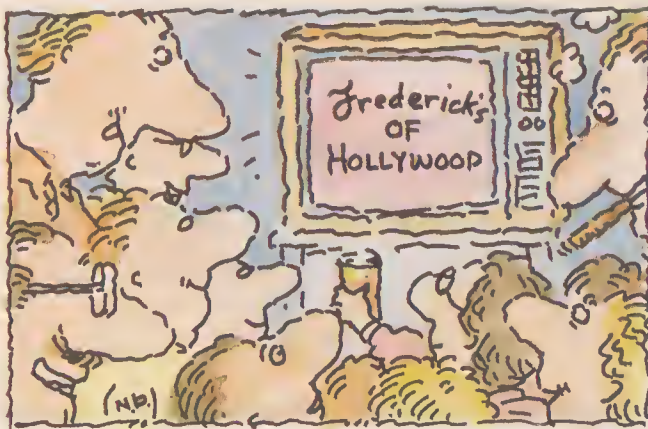
N.Y.-area Creditron: Movies 24 hours a day, for 97 cents.

Creditron is about the size of a Coke (or Pepsi) vending machine. Inside there's room for 168 VHS or Beta (or blank) tapes—the average is about 45 different titles, with 3 or 4 of each. Shoppers insert a charge card, select and receive a tape using pushbuttons, and take a receipt.

Each tape is bar-coded, so when you return it—into the return drawer of any Creditron machine—the code is read, your charge computed, and the transaction finalized. If you don't return the tape your account is billed the full retail price. If you make a mistake and get a tape you don't want, you have 10 minutes to return it—no charge.

Poster Children

Missing children are a *cause celebre* for home-video companies. Now Playhouse Video, the kidvid outfit formed by CBS/Fox Video, will send a poster of four



See-Through Video

Fashion video clips made a splash on broadcast TV this spring, but Frederick's of Hollywood—the skimpy lingerie boutique—is the first fashion designer to make a full-length, concept home vid-

eo to show off its wares.

With a plot more transparent than a see-through nightie, the Frederick's video follows a Jane Doe from the little town of Dalton Falls, Minnesota to the city of sin. Doe stops off at Frederick's, buys

some extremely brief lingerie, and takes a catalogue to show to her friends back home. "The catalogue goes from house to house," says writer Norman Martin, "and in eight to ten vignettes we'll see how Frederick's changes these people's lives." Specifically? "You know what these things do to people. There'll be some sex, but it'll be R-rated stuff. Nothing you wouldn't see on HBO any night of the week."

At presstime the video was several weeks shy of shooting, and distribution plans hadn't been set. But according to Martin you'll probably be able to order the tape right from the Frederick's catalogue—along with the rest of its frilly wares.

Vidbits

You have the record, now you can have the video. *We Are the World—The Video Event* (\$14.95, from MusicVision), is a 30-minute documentary that includes the 7-minute "We Are the World" video written by Lionel Richie and Michael Jackson and featuring Richie, Jackson, Bruce Springsteen, and Ray Charles (the showstopper). Proceeds will be donated to USA for Africa. (See Frank Lovece's review in "Quick Takes/Video.")

New World Home Video has its "first original outside acquisition." Sound important? It is. *The Female Impersonator Pageant* has 30 female impersonators vying for the coveted title of Fe-

male Impersonator of the Year. And you can get it on LV disc too.

Hero worship comes to home video with the Marvel Comics Video Library, from Prism Entertainment. You can catch up on all your kidvid favorites, including Spider-Man, Captain America, and Ironman. Marvel villains also get their day on tape—doing grim deeds are the likes of Mole Man, the Green Goblin, and Doctor Octopus. The hour-long tapes are due out mid-September, and will list at \$19.95. Prism could've called it the "Marvel Comics Rerun Library," though—all the cartoons were originally produced for the networks or syndication.

Best of the worst—It'll give your "commercial killer" fits. *Advertising Age* magazine has a \$360 video of 1984's "best" ads, led by Michael Jackson for Pepsi and Mary Lou you-know-who for Wheaties. The climax of the tape should be the celebrity interview segments—with ad executives.

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TV Den

Techniques and Technology

You Could Have A Video 8

by Roderick Woodcock



Right after we had put the finishing touches on last month's camcorder story, Sony took the wraps off of the U.S. version of its 8mm video system, on sale in Japan since last January. (We did receive preliminary information in time to include

bers of the press were sharp and clear, with vivid colors and crisp details.

While Sony will be selling a full line of accessories for Video 8, including a 4-event/21-day programmable tuner/timer and a 2-hour tape for off-air taping (other lengths are for 90-, 60-, and 30-minute recording), spokesmen emphasize that Video 8, like Betamovie, is designed as an electronic moviemaker. Some technology built into the camcorder has never been used before in a consumer video product.

Unlike all conventional home VCRs, for example, Sony's Video 8 uses two rotary "flying erase heads" instead of a fixed erase head. Flying erase heads completely eliminate the problems of glitches, color moire, and staining that can occur between the end of one scene and the beginning of the next—problems still common on some other consumer equipment. Clean insert edits, with AFM audio, are also possible. If you're taping over a cassette you used once before, there won't be a long burst of noise or blank spaces between the segments.

Sony calls Video 8's recording heads M&F for Metal Amorphous Ferrite, and they're compatible with both the metal-powder 8mm tapes now available and the metal-evaporated tapes promised for future delivery. The rotary video heads do more than just record video. Video 8 is an AFM (Audio Frequency Modulation) recorder, like Beta Hi-Fi. That means the monaural audio—stereo is a future capability, along with PCM (pulse code modulation) digital audio—is recorded

helically on the tape along with the video, yielding a dynamic range of more than 85dB and negligible wow and flutter. Those same heads, and another new technology called Automatic Track Finding or ATF, eliminates the need for a tracking control, insuring precise and automatic tracking adjustments even with tapes made on different machines, or tapes that have changed their dimensions slightly due to hot or cold temperatures.

The Video 8 camcorder is slightly lighter and smaller than the latest BMC-550K "Super Betamovie," measuring 7-5/8 inches high by 4-5/8 wide by 13-1/2 deep and weighing in at 4 pounds, 5 ounces. Like Betamovie, it uses an improved high-resolution CCD chip as an image pickup, which resists image lag, sticking, burning, or the "comet tail" effects often found on many cheaper tube-type cameras. Color reproduction is excellent—but with a minimum sensitivity of only 19 lux. That may improve in later models since many competing cameras exceed that spec by nearly half, with 10-lux sensitivity or less.

Like most current camcorders, Video 8 comes with a noninterchangeable 6:1 (11.5-70mm) f1.4 power-zoom lens and macro capability. Optional wide-angle and telephoto supplementary lenses are available. The built-in unidirectional electret-condenser microphone can be disconnected and replaced with a more versatile lavalier or boom. By using a host of newly designed miniaturized circuits, Sony has made its new 8mm entry energy-efficient as well. With a 6.9-watt power draw, including the viewfinder, the rechargeable

the CCD-V8 in our chart.) The diminutive 8mm cassette is here to stay, and the new Sony camcorder will enhance the credibility of the 8mm machines already being sold by Kodak, Polaroid, G.E., Canon, and Sanyo.

Sony calls its system Video 8—or V-8, as in "you could have hadda..." (while the system was under development, its codename was "tomato"). How good is the audio and video quality? The pictures I viewed at a press conference in early April were top-notch. TOP notch! (trivia for you *Raiders of the Lost Ark* fans). TV programs recorded from cable were as good as any half-inch VCR could have produced and tapes shot on location by Sony personnel and by mem-

NP-22 battery lasts one hour.

Video 8 comes with a detachable one-inch black & white electronic viewfinder, twice the size of the half-inch EVF used on some competing camcorders. It's adjustable for left- or right-eyed use. You can play back the tapes you make on the B&W viewfinder or on a video monitor or TV using a compact RF modulator that plugs into a multipin jack on the side of the camcorder.

The RFU-80 adapter is more than just an RF modulator. It has separate audio and video input and output jacks as well, making it possible not only to play back direct audio and video onto a monitor (such as Sony's extremely compact KX-4200 Profeel monitor, with a very sharp 3.7-inch screen), but to record audio and video into the camcorder from an external source. Unlike most of the other camcorders reviewed last month this one makes it easy to record from another VCR, external tuner, even another camcorder, just by plugging in the RFU-80, which comes with Video 8. Other systems either don't offer any audio/video inputs at all, or let you access them only through an optional AC adapter/charger or accessory tuner.

Sony has also made it easier to edit original tapes from one format to another. The RM-E100 Editing Controller in-

terfaces between two 8mm units, between an 8mm unit and a Beta, or between two Sony Beta machines. (Sony spokesmen have steadfastly reaffirmed their commitment to the Beta format by unveiling a new line of Betamax VCRs, including the SL-HF900, the most sophisticated VCR to date.)

With the optional TT-V8 tuner/timer, the CCD-V8 also functions as a home VCR. Lay the recorder on its side in the niche above the tuner and you'll immediately notice how all the operating controls are neatly deployed along the rear panel. There's even an LCD linear-time counter which displays exact tape position in hours, minutes, and seconds. It automatically adds and subtracts the time on the readout as you shuttle the tape in forward or reverse, or when you use high-speed picture search. The design makes this feature possible by threading the tape inside the camcorder in the familiar Beta-type U-load pattern so that timing information on the tape's cue track can be read constantly by the VCR's circuitry. There's also a still/pause control, but no slow motion yet. Sony has also provided a large assortment of accessories for a tiny BE-V8 cassette rewinder/eraser. And unlike Sony's BE-V50 Beta rewinder—which I once erroneously reported could

fast forward tapes as well—this one works in both directions. Honest!

Coupled with the other 8mm systems we reviewed last month, Video 8 goes a long way to give the new format credibility with consumers. But what about Beta and VHS? Despite the rash of defections from the Beta camp—the latest being Toshiba, which will join NEC in selling both Beta and VHS—the Beta format will continue for quite a few years. And so will VHS.

Over a long period (one Sony exec speculates five to seven years) the number of 8mm systems sold might eventually equal the current population of Beta and VHS VCRs. Time will tell. For the moment, the rather pricey 8mm camcorder systems (Sony's lists for \$1695) are no threat to booming half-inch VCR sales, with typical pricing around \$300 to \$400 (and a few under-\$200 bargains for those who know where to look). It will be some time before 8mm systems descend to the level of those bargain-basement prices.

Since it's a totally new format, 8mm will probably lead to more crossing of the format lines. Some buyers may be Betaphiles, many more may have VHS only, and still others will have 'em all (lucky them).

I want one.



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(1) A supremely comfortable backpack with a unique camera sling that removes the camera weight from your arms between takes. It also serves as a safety

strap. (2) Can be used as a shoulder bag when accessing the VCR controls. (3) All straps stow neatly under a special travel cover, converting the

Action Pac into a convenient and trim carrying or storage case. (Fits under an airline seat.)

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Random Access

Personal Computers, News, and Games

Word Processors Catalogue Tape Libraries

A few months ago we reported how Fred Sweeney, a New Jersey videophile, used his Apple II and *PFS: File* (Software Publishing) to catalogue his library of 400 video-cassettes. We explained how Macintosh users with the same problem were using *FileVision* (Telos Software) to perform the same tasks. The only drawback was price—*PFS: File* costs \$125 and *FileVision* runs \$195.

Now you can do much of the same with ordinary word-processing programs. Yes, the humble word processor can untangle your hopelessly disorganized cassette collection and set you on the road to anxiety-free viewing.

Even the cheapest word processors—including the ones that sell for as little as \$19.95—have what is known as a “search” function. This allows you to scan an entire document for a single word or a short string of words. If your word processor has this function, you also have a videocassette library manager.

Here's how it works. For each item you own, use your word processor to create a short electronic index card. For example:

Title: *Hobson's Choice*
Director: David Lean
Cast: Charles Laughton, John Mills, Daphne Anderson
Category: Movie, Comedy
Tape Number: 6

Title: *The Great Escape*
Director: John Sturges
Cast: Steve McQueen, James Garner, Richard Attenborough, Charles Bronson
Category: Movie, Drama
Tape Number: 7

Just keep typing in the infor-



mation until your entire collection has been entered. The format isn't important: include whatever data you feel is important.

Now start reading. Say you're in the mood to watch an Orson Welles film but can't decide which one to see. To scan all of the Welles films in your collection, search using the word “Welles.” Your video display's cursor will then move through the index, stopping at each mention of Orson's surname.

You can also use the search function to look for a specific film, even if you don't know its precise title. Is it *Bridge on the River Kwai* or *Bridge over the River Kwai*? No matter. Just search for “Bridge” and you'll find the film in no time. You can also conduct searches by category, cast members, tape number, or any bit of information you decide to include within your index

cards.

A word processor, of course, doesn't have all the capabilities of a full-fledged database manager. For instance, you can't make Boolean searches or relational comparisons. But who needs such advanced functions? Even if your video library includes thousands of titles, a simple word processor is the only data organizer you'll ever need. Of course, the data entry will take some time. But it may be well worth it.

—John Edwards

The Animated Mac

How do you know when a program is truly great? When you can't get it off the screen long enough to write something about it, that's how. At least that's the case with *VideoWorks*, a video-animation system for the Apple Macintosh (Hayden Software, \$79.95).

At first *VideoWorks* seems like a strange idea. The Mac

is not a video-oriented computer. Its screen is black & white, not color. It is not a game or recreation machine. (In fact, it is a rather hard-nosed business computer.) And it is paper-oriented. That is, almost every Mac program is aimed at producing documents.

So why create a powerful video animation system when the results can't be printed or even displayed on a TV monitor other than the skimpy built-in nine-incher? Our suspicion is that the Chicago-based MacroMind group (which designed another bestseller for Hayden, *MusicWorks*) did it to show off. *VideoWorks* is one of the most impressive computer-graphics programs available on any micro.

Imagine high-quality *MacPaint* graphics in full animation. Think of digitized pictures (*MacVision* video) overlaid with animation. That's what *VideoWorks* can do. Pictures can be originated using a part of the program called “Cheappaint,” or can be moved into the program from an existing *MacPaint* file with a neat little utility called “Paint Grabber.” Up to 24 such pictures—referred to as the “cast”—can be used in a scene. In addition to visual effects *VideoWorks* offers a basic file of sound effects that can be cued to the action.

Three disks make up the set: the program itself, a disk full of sample “movies,” and an art disk with hundreds of predrawn images for immediate use. *VideoWorks* isn't a toolkit—it's a toybox! And—surprise—the 133-page manual is not only straightforward and useful, it's intelligently written, introducing the program via a short history of film animation and the

role that computers will play in the cartoons of the future.

The best thing about *VideoWorks* is that it pre-sages a new era in software. With new, fast personal computers oriented toward color video graphics on the way (Commodore's *Amiga* is one of them), the next generation in creativity may be dawning.

—Tim Onosko

Flash! Dick Tracy Green with Envy

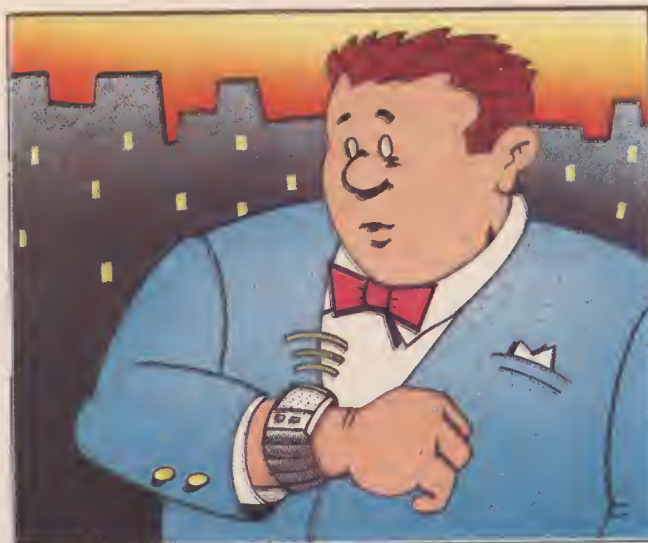
Seiko, the well-known watch purveyor, has been making a concerted foray into the world of very small computers. Yes, we mean wrist-size types that are now compatible with personal computers. Its Datagraph 2001 has 2K RAM of usable memory and lets users split it in half for scheduling and for data storage. The firm hopes to sell this smart watch to busy executives and doctors who seem to misplace their date-books. Our guess is that it will have better luck with gadget nuts who can't resist showing it off to their colleagues. The package, which includes an interface module that connects to the Apple II series, is priced at \$199.

Souping Up the Mac

Macintosh users will tell you they love everything about the innovative little desktop computer—everything, that is, except for a tiny icon that looks like a wristwatch. When it appears, it is the Mac's way of telling you to wait—and wait—and wait. For a machine with all of its processing horsepower, you can spend what seems like a lifetime looking at that wristwatch.

Well, the Macintosh developers seem to have gotten the message. A new model nicknamed the "Turbo Mac" is rumored to be in the works for introduction sometime next year. It will speed things up by using a much faster version of its Motorola 68000 microprocessor and a hard disk for data storage. In the meantime, however, the Mac team has rewritten one vital piece of the machine's operating system and added a handy utility, both of which offer new zip.

Finder is the program that



displays the Mac's famous "desktop" and allows movement from program to program. It's the headquarters for all of the computer's activities. The original *Finder*, though, was a virtual bottleneck. It was slow, slow, slow. New versions (numbered 4.0 and higher) are considerably faster and offer at least one new feature, a "Minifinder" that allows rapid transfer between programs. In addition, the new *Finder* prints out catalogues of floppy-disk files and has a "Shut Down" function to quickly eject disks and reset the machine.

Even more exciting is *Switcher*, a nifty program that breaks down a 512K Macintosh into four 128K machines so that up to four different programs can reside in the machine at once. *Switcher* adds a small two-headed arrow icon to the upper right-hand corner of the video screen. Pointing and clicking on it with the "mouse" instantly switches to the next program. The author, Andy Hertzfeld, has added animation, so that the Mac screens horizontally scroll from one to another. It's like having four machines on a turntable!

In its own mysterious way, Apple is furnishing the new speedups without much fanfare. The new *Finder* is being released as part of the system software on many new program packages. *Switcher* is making its way through the underground of user groups and via CompuServe's on-line MAUG Apple users' group. It is not

known whether Apple will formally introduce the pair or provide the much-needed written documentation to support the improvements.

—Tim Onosko

Artificial Insanity

Mindscape, a Midwest-based (no less?) company barely a year and a half old, originally jumped into the shark-infested software waters with educational programming. Recently, howev-

er, it decided to change course and compete in entertainment. This month it is publishing an interesting program called *Racter*.

Racter (short for "Racounteur") is probably the closest microcomputers have come to Dadaism. It's really a question-answer program with a 2800-word vocabulary, much like the *Eliza* program which mimicked Rogerian therapy. The difference is that *Racter* is meant to entertain. And though its answers to users' queries vaguely follow the basic rules of grammar, *Racter* is longwinded, abstruse, and makes little sense. *Racter* is claimed to be the first nonhuman author of a book (*The Policeman's Beard Is Half Constructed*, Warner Books).

All right, you're dying for a sample of *Racter's* dialogue.

"Who are your chief influences as a writer, *Racter*?"

"Maybe Genghis Khan's uncle or maybe George Washington. He's from the Hotel Pierre, Genghis Khan, that is." Don't say we didn't warn you.

—Doug Garr



BEST SELLERS/HOME

1. **Print Shop.** AP, C64, AT. Broderbund.
2. **Print Shop Graphics Library.** AP, C64. Broderbund.
3. **Newsraam.** AP. Springboard.
4. **Dollars & Sense.** AP, APc, IBM, MAC. Monogram.
5. **Bank Street Writer.** AP, APc, IBM, C64, AT. Broderbund.
6. **ClickArt Effects.** MAC. T/Maker.
7. **Managing Your Money.** IBM. MECA.
8. **Mac the Knife.** MAC. Miles Computing.
9. **Music Works.** MAC. Hayden Software.
10. **Dazzle Draw.** APc. Broderbund.

BEST SELLERS/RECREATION

1. **Microsoft Flight Simulator.** IBM. Microsoft.
2. **Flight Simulator II.** AP, C64, AT. Sublogic.
3. **Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy.** MAC, C64, AT, AP, IBM. Infocom.
4. **Sargan III.** AP, IBM, MAC, C64. Hayden Software.
5. **Gato.** AP, IBM, PCjr. Spectrum Holobyte.
6. **Lode Runner.** AP, IBM, MAC, C64, AT. Broderbund.
7. **Karateka.** AP. Broderbund.
8. **Wizardry.** AP, IBM. Sir-Tech Software.
9. **Zork I.** AP, IBM, MAC, AT, CP/M, DEC, TIP. Infocom.
10. **Ultima III.** AP, IBM, C64, AT. Origin Systems.

LEGEND: AP = Apple, APc = Apple IIc, APe = Apple IIe, AT = Atari, C64 = Commodore 64, COM = Commodore Pet/CBM, CP/M = 5¼" and 8" formats, DEC = DEC Rainbow, EPS = Epson QX-10, IBM = IBM-PC, MAC = Apple Macintosh, PCjr = IBM PCjr, TIP = Texas Instruments Professional, TRS = TRS-80, VIC = Commodore Vic-20, VTR = Victor 9000, WNG = Wang Personal Computer, ZEN = Zenith 100.

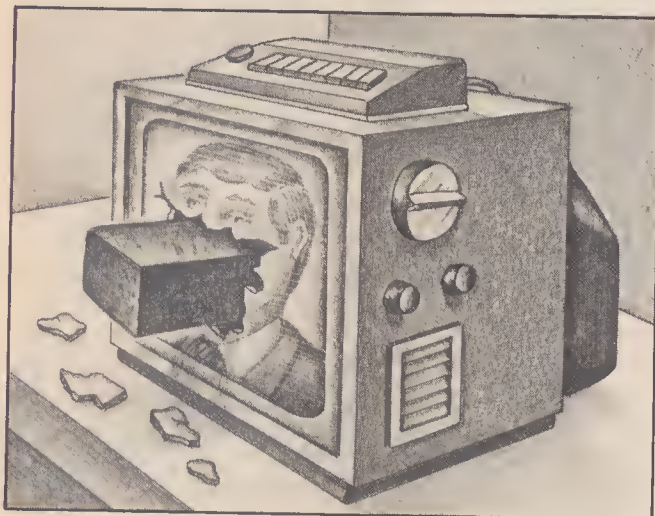
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New Channels

Covering Cable, Pay-Per-View, STV, and DBS

The Abominable Showmen

by Tim Onosko



Charles Waller

A few years ago, an enterprising designer made and sold a foam-rubber brick in department stores as a gag gift. The idea was to keep it on the coffeetable next to your favorite chair and hurl it at the TV whenever something annoying came across

the screen. It was a clever symbolic gesture. For whatever reason, these handy little items are tough to find today.

Sure, cable television expands viewing choices—but no one should ever forget that it provides brand-new opportunities for those who traditionally have been too abrasive, annoying, or otherwise obnoxious for broadcast TV. (Some, I'm sure, will disagree with this thesis. For instance, WOR's late-night talk-show host Joe Franklin practically wrote the book on annoying personalities decades ago.)

Nonetheless, cable offers new ground (or is it wind?) to break. People who couldn't get two minutes at the bottom of a network newscast can have entire shows all to themselves. Others can buy whole chunks of time to proffer the most banal garbage ever seen on the tube. Still others use that time-honored means of annoyance, the commercial message, to elevate the science to an art. Thank God for those remote-control channel switchers Jack Valenti and the network executives hate so much. If America is "zapping" commercials and changing channels as often as the experts say they are, it's for a reason: they don't like what (or more precisely, who) they're seeing.

Take for example Mo Siegel, president of a company called Celestial Seasonings whose main product is called Sleepytime Tea. Somebody, somewhere introduced Mo to a TV camera and told him he could pick up two minutes on cable for dirt. Now, just when the world is going to hell in a boxcar on the Cable News Network, Mo pops in to sell his tea in the creepiest, wimpiest, post-Woodstock nasal soft sell imaginable.

At first Mo just sold the tea and gave away "high-quality lithographs" (read posters) from the "high-quality original artwork" found on his tea boxes (a picture of a

cute little teddy bear in a nightshirt and nightcap). He suggested "cuddling up" with a cup of Sleepytime "in front of a warm fireplace" (tell that to the guy who lives in a one-bedroom on the 17th floor of a high-rise). Lately, though, he has taken to reading the words of wisdom, aphorisms, and otherwise stale chestnuts he prints on the boxes. Stuff like this, from "a child's commandments for parents": "Criticize what I do, Mom or Dad, but *please* don't criticize me." Eeee-yuk! The only thing Mo Siegel accomplishes with these ads is to prove that somebody named Mo Siegel can be as terribly precious as he is.

Mo, of course, buys his time—as does Ed Beckley, the self-proclaimed "Millionaire Maker." Ed's racket is real estate—not necessarily buying and selling it, but teaching other people how to do it. His "at-home seminar," a book and some cheap cassette tapes, supposedly guarantees you the wisdom (and income) of a Donald Trump for just a few hundred bucks. His secret, though, if you listen closely, is to buy bank foreclosures. Real shrewd and very heartwarming.

Now, in fairness to Mr. Ed, his techniques may actually work. He has certainly rounded up enough former mail carriers, bubbleheaded ex-secretaries, and unemployed to testify that they do. But it's not *what* Beckley is saying, that's so annoying, it's when and

how. His half-hour teaser show has appeared on practically every cable channel that needs the money (and which one doesn't?) he's willing to shell out to annoy viewers. On the otherwise respectable Financial News Network, the program has appeared in the afternoon. Late at night, you might find it on the Lifetime network. Even the noncommercial Learning Channel has sold time to this guy.

The production values of this program are, as one would expect, pretty cheesy. (Not as bad as Mo Siegel's though—Ed at least uses more than one camera.) But that's not the issue. Most people probably cruise by the "Millionaire Maker" on their way to some other channel and never realize they're seeing a 30-minute commercial, not a program with real editorial content. How does this guy get away with it?

Of course, you don't have to be a salesman to annoy people, as Cable News Network's Sandy Freeman proved. Her nightly program was the inappropriately named *Freeman Reports*. She didn't. And as we went to press, news arrived that CNN had finally canceled her show. The real question was how she kept it so long.

But Freeman was out of place on a network as good as CNN. While she

may have been well-briefed, she was largely uninformed. On one program following the takeover of the ABC television network by Capital Cities Communications, a TV industry analyst actually had to remind her that it was CBS, not ABC, that her boss Ted Turner wanted to acquire. To make matters worse, the story had been news for days—not just in the major papers, but on CNN itself.

Sandy may need a job, but Jim Bakker doesn't. He has a network. If you have not yet seen the *Jim Bakker Show*, AKA the *PTL Club*, you're missing one of cable's real treats: unfettered hard-sell capitalism masquerading as religion. At *PTL* (which one savvy country singer has said stands for "Pass the Loot") everything's for sale, from the usual books and teaching cassettes to imitation Cabbage Patch Kids dolls, Gospel music records and tapes by wife Tammy Fay, and time-share condos smack in the middle of Bakker's empire, a theme park and shopping mall called Heritage U.S.A. And cable viewers are buying it.


After the press discovered he was planning to build a water park (with wave pools and giant slides) at Heritage U.S.A., Bakker introduced the scheme on his show by calling it a "youth center." When others criticized his selling "lifetime" free annual stays at one of his

new hotels (paid for *in cash* by donations) for \$1000 a pop, he upped the ante to \$1500. The cold winter week after he begged and pleaded for "emergency" donations to keep the troubled *PTL Club* on the air via time purchased on dozens of local TV stations, he moved the program for a week of broadcasts from sunny Hawaii.

His latest plan—a workfarm staffed by indigent street people he will import to North Carolina—is to grow food for Heritage U.S.A.'s restaurants. Last spring, for no apparent reason, he changed the color of his hair and eyebrows from dark brown to near-blond.

For the time being, at least, Bakker is safe on his own cable channel. Sandy Freeman's out looking for a job. And you know that if Mo Siegel sells his tea, he'll be back again and again. As for the "Millionaire Maker," he'll probably fade into the poolside scene at La Costa.

But, folks, the point of all this—the lesson to be learned by looking at personalities like Jim and Sandy and Ed and Mo—is not that these people are wimps or comen or lousy reporters or even weirdos. The point is that television, the most potent medium ever invented by man on earth, is up for grabs.

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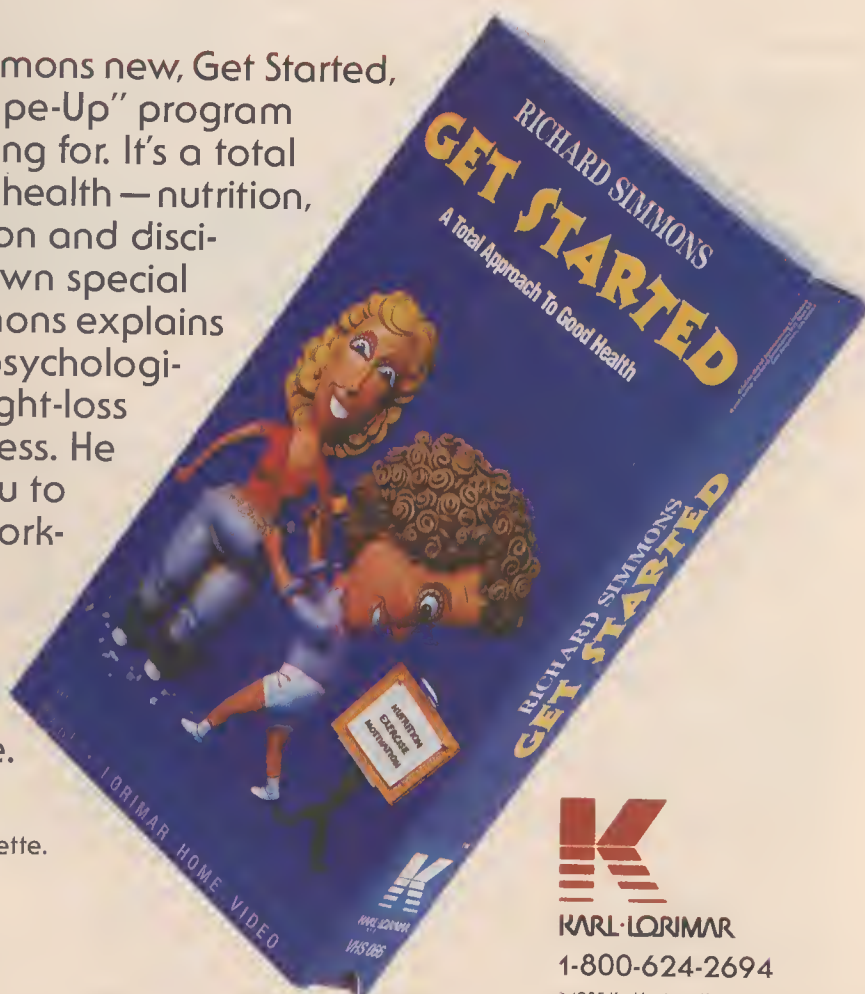
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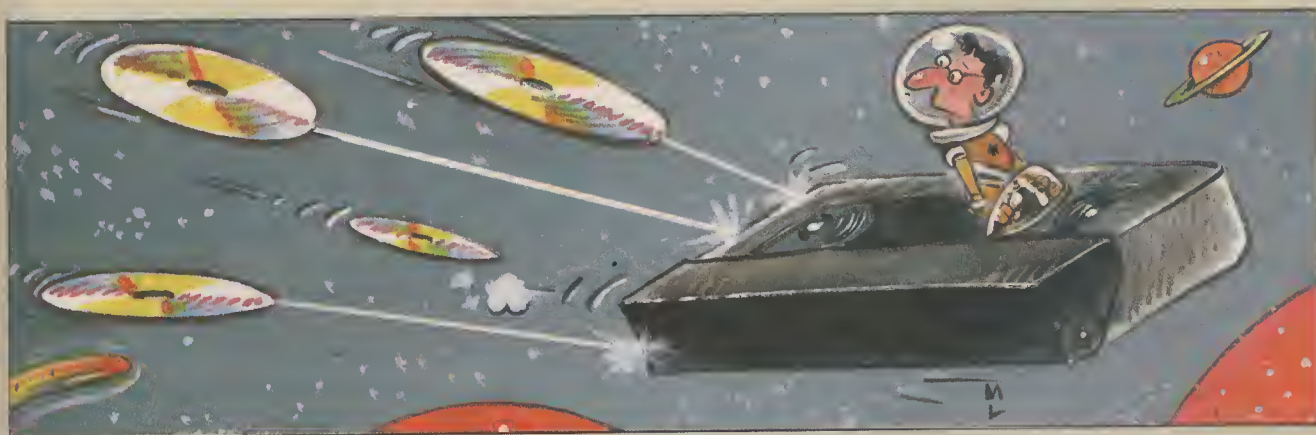
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Video's Guide to PROGRAMMING

NEWS & VIEWS



Illustrations by Mike Lester

Is the Laser Mightier than the Sword?— LV as a Program Format

Readers continue to ask about the prospects of the LaserVision videodisc as a program format. The answer depends on your goals in building a program "library" and the nature of your collecting and viewing habits.

LV is not only alive but healthy in both player and program availability. With the broad range of independent laser manufacturing efforts that have sprung up, I don't believe it will suddenly evaporate as did the Teldec TeD, Thompson CSF, and RCA CED videodisc systems. Although the number of LV players in use—the factor that encourages LV program release—has reached no more than an estimated 250,000 and the number of titles is now at 2000-plus, I think the LV format can be expected to continue to grow. Without question LV disc distribution could be better organized and taken more seriously by the major labels who are releasing in LV. Starting earlier this year, the folks at Pio-

neer seem at long last to be working on this and have become very helpful with information.

Unfortunately, LV still suffers greatly from a combination of a lack of its own momentum and the enormous head start tape has had over disc. MCA's Norman Glenn, the LV format's first programming executive, used to regularly point out that in audio, disc came before tape and therefore audio discs had a clear chance to build up the critical mass of users needed to encourage continued development, quality improvement, cost reduction, and program releasing no matter what tape would ultimately be able to offer. This has not been the case in video. LV's particular problem is that it became available as a home format three years after half-inch tape got its start. LV has yet to reach a self-generating point in its own right.

Partly to catch up with tape's lead, early LV disc promoters made extravagant claims on which they couldn't deliver—and that slowed acceptance of the format. One was that LV programs would be dramatically cheaper than tape, with relatively new movies well under \$25 and specialized information and other programming well under \$10. But the first (December 1978)

catalogue with these prices turned out to be more of a wishbook. Within six months prices started to head up for the relatively few of the first LV programs that actually did become available, only about one-third of the first 200 listed titles. Retail prices have continued upward even as sales volumes have increased and efficiencies have been incorporated into the manufacturing process.

Meanwhile tape-program prices have been steadily coming down to about one-third to one-half of what they were during LV's 1978-79 startup period. At this point, average program prices are about the same for LV as they are for tape. While a lot of tape programs are priced above LV, there are a growing number of tape releases being priced below LV, even down to \$9.95. Certain under-60-minute releases occupying a single LV-CLV side cost the same for disc and tape. Of course you must look at these costs in terms of the specific programs you are interested in: *Gone with the Wind* on tape is \$90, and on LV disc it's \$50. But on the other hand, if you just want *GWTW* for a one-night rental, it's difficult to rent on LV because of its susceptibility to surface scratching. You should be able to tape-rent it for easily less

By Ken Winslow

than \$10.

Another early claim was that LV disc releases would offer program viewers still picture access and frame indexing that would never be available in tape. The first LV catalogue did offer almost exclusively LV-CAV programming that was capable of such use. But in efforts to cut costs, the switch to the more economical LV-CLV mode did away with all still picture access capability in exchange for doubling per-side capacity from 30 to 60 minutes. Meanwhile, VCR makers started turning out four- and five-head machines with automatic noise-bar reduction circuits that could do a halfway decent special effects playback at no sacrifice in playing time.

Almost everything, with some important exceptions, that has appeared on disc has already appeared on tape. There are six times or more theatrical movies and similarly popular programs on tape than on LV disc.

As one reader has observed, despite the fact that neither RCA or any other manufacturer makes CED disc players, he continues to see a flow of significantly lower-priced new CED releases. My reply is that new CEDs are a mere pittance when compared to monthly LV releasing. RCA maintains the only working CED disc factory. Unlike several competitive facilities now turning out LV discs, RCA does this at low prices to support players recently sold or still to be sold. Major labels continue their CED retreat. Among the latest is CBS/Fox, which has given over to RCA VideoDiscs the right to make and sell certain of its titles on CED. At some point RCA will turn off its CED program facility and that will be that.

The bottom line at this point is that if your goals are primarily low-cost program rental and library building (especially off-air/cable recording), and if you want still-picture effects and a maximum uninterrupted running time, then the VCR is for you. As for format—that's another loaded question altogether.

Get Ready for Those 'Cable Ready' Claims

Just how "ready" your new TV is to pick up special mid-, super-, and hyperband cable channels is a bone of contention between TV makers and cable operators. Some operators have been so upset with what they term the misleading claims of TV makers and retailers that they have gone to the Federal Trade Commission asking for a warning label. TV retailers are charged with wrongfully saying that "cable ready" sets must be purchased to receive any kind of cable service, and also with intentionally selling TV sets and VCR tuners with thumbscrew tuning wheels that can be manually adjusted to find those unscrambled, but hidden, special cable and master-antenna pay channels.

While all TV receivers are required by law to tune all VHF and UHF broadcast

channel frequencies—whether distributed through the air or by wire—no such requirement applies to the additional channels used for years in closed-circuit cable systems. Since these cable-only channels do not radiate through the air, they are not regulated, and cable operators often do with them as they will.

Because of increasing community-wide use of these cable channels, TV manufacturers—always on the lookout for new features to make last year's set obsolete—have in recent years made their TV and VCR tuners more and more "cable ready," i.e. able to find these special cable channels. Initially this was accomplished by manually tunable thumbscrews. Lately it has been done using frequency-synthesized circuits which still can be fine-tuned on better receivers and VCRs.

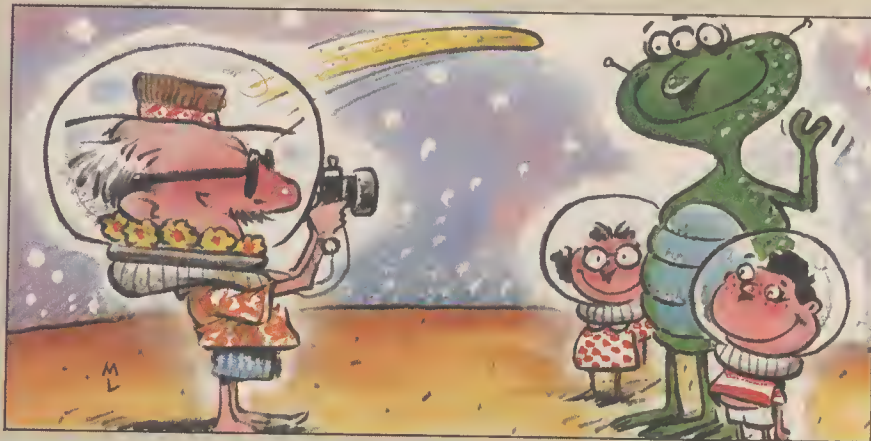
Many local cable and master-antenna (MATV) systems will convert imported distant station channels, specially origi-

meeting to try to work things out. The EIA/CEG has advised its members to stop using the term "cable ready," and instead use "cable compatible," and has issued an advisory entitled "Important Points to Consider When Purchasing a Television Set for Use on a Cable System." It takes the TV maker's side, but it is useful if you keep this bias in mind. (Get a copy from EIA/CEG, 2001 Eye St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20006.)

'Responsive' Mars Disc: You Control It

In contrast to conventional linear programming designed for uninterrupted viewing from the opening FBI warning through the closing credits, "responsive programming" is made to be stopped at various points of interest for study or enjoyment.

Producers' original approach to respon-



nated local channels, and pay-TV channels to the lower and easily reachable unused UHF channels, and not use non-VHF/UHF special cable channels at all. This means, among other things, that there is no uniformity to the use of special cable channels by cable and MATV operators.

All this amounts to a fight over who is going to sell or lease the extra means we need (or are led to believe we need) to receive special cable channels. With the introduction of all-digital receivers, a new round of TV-manufacturers-versus-cable-industry contention is in the works; the Toshiba digital receiver can be reprogrammed to unscramble the sync-suppression technique used by some cable operators to encode the various pay channels.

In the market for a cable-ready TV? Start by asking the operator of your cable/MATV system for information about his use of VHF, UHF, and cable channels. Then when you go to your TV retailer, you will be better able to deal with clerks who are motivated to tell you anything to make a sale.

The TV manufacturers, represented by the Electronic Industries Association Consumer Electronics Group (EIA/CEG), and the cable TV operators, represented by the National Cable TV Association, are

sive programming was to automate it. In effect, the program controls you. Whenever you do whatever you are called upon to do, the microprocessor-controlled program quickly recues and starts you on another segment. Producers of automated responsive programming for home use (termed "interactive" or "participative") have had a tough row to hoe. Not enough of us are yet ready to be lockstep-controlled by our TV sets. Optical Programming Associates (*The First National Kidisc* and others) has quietly faded away following the pullout of MCA. Cincinnati-based *Vidmax*, producer of two excellent *Mystery-Disc* releases among others, has closed up shop and gone to Canada to turn its hand to other ventures.

Another form of responsive video proving to be much more successful is the kind that lets you stay in control. It is simpler to follow and enjoy. It usually contains a mix of presentation styles. Along with conventional sit-back-and-watch sections there are still sequences for you to pause and step your way through for text, illustrations, or diagrams.

Video Vision's latest in its *Space Archive* series of LV-CAV laser videodiscs, entitled *Mars and Beyond* (see the "Directory"), lifts the art of responsive television to

new heights. With the theme of "Sight Seeing in the Outer Planets," it contains photo and video transmissions from the Viking and Voyager missions to Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. The material has been assembled in the form of a "Travel Guide" that offers you different options.

One is a complete soup-to-nuts package tour in the form of a 26-minute NASA-produced film taking up one side. The other side consists of a series of excursions devoted to such topics as "Martian Geology," "Moons," and "Polar Caps." Finally, as you might expect from any tour arrangement, you can chuck the planned itinerary and strike off on your own.

You are supplied with 3D glasses for 14 minutes of "reach out and touch" views of the Viking Lander, the Martian landscape, and Mars from orbit (a first for laser videodisc). You are equipped with a detailed map ("Image Directory") that tells exactly what you are looking at whenever you want to know. And like any self-respecting tourist, you can even send for a U.S. Geological Survey shaded relief map of the territory you have covered while on Mars.

Video Vision has arranged this tour so you can get as much or as little out of it as you are willing to put into it. But unlike other trips that end up as faded memories, the Video Vision disc lets you go again and again, any time you want. This is responsive video at its best.

Grapplers Grapple

Wrestling is making a broadcast/cable comeback around the country. This now includes video, as you will see by the entries for the first offerings of the Coliseum Video label in the Sports "Directory." The World Wrestling Federation has built up a large film library going back more than 40 years which it is going to make available for Coliseum issue. This should provide a wealth of material, comic and otherwise, if the first three titles are any indication. While other sports have their humorous moments, wrestling has always seemed one long canvas comedy, occasionally interrupted by some sport. Coliseum Video keeps up the tradition. You'll love it!



TOP 10 PROGRAMS

Cassette Sales

1. Jane Fonda's Workout (3)*. Color. 1982. Jane Fonda assisted by 7 instructors. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Karl.

2. Star Trek III: The Search for Spock (1). Color. 1984. William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, DeForest Kelley. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captions). \$29.95. Paramount.

3. Gone with the Wind (2). Color. 1939. Clark Gable, Vivien Leigh, Olivia de Havilland. 231 min. Beta, VHS (digitally enhanced stereo, closed captions). \$89.95. MGM/UA.

4. Jone Fonda's Prime Time Workout (7). Color. 1984. Less strenuous routines. 50 min. Beta, VHS (closed captions). \$39.95. Karl.

5. Lionel Richie/All Night Long (4). Color. 1984. Includes "All Night Long," "Running with the Night," others. 35 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$14.95 (introductory). MusicVision.

6. Private Dancer (5). Color. 1984. Tina Turner sings "What's Love Got to Do with It," "Better Be Good to Me," others. 17 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$16.95. Sony.

7. Purple Rain (6). Color. 1984. Prince, Morris Day, Apollonia Kotero. 113 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$29.98. Warner.

8. Workout Challenge (9). Color. 1984. More strenuous routines, from Jane Fonda. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Karl.

9. Do It Debbie's Way (10). Color. 1983. Debbie Reynolds leads workouts for all ages. 85 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Associates.

10. Whom! The Video (-). Color. Includes "Wham! Rap," "Wake Me

Up Before You Go-Go," others. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captions). \$19.98. CBS/Fox.

Videodisc Sales

1. Gone with the Wind (1)*. As above, "Cassette Sales." LV (stereo, CX, closed captions). \$49.95. MGM/UA.

2. Star Trek III: The Search for Spock (2). As above, "Cass. Sales." LV, CED (stereo, closed captions). \$29.95. Paramount.

3. Police Academy (4). Color. 1984. Steve Guttenberg, Kim Cattrall. G.W. Bailey. 96 min. (R) LV. \$34.98. CED. \$29.98. Warner.

4. Red Dawn (3). Color. 1984. John Milius, Patrick Swayze, C. Thomas Howell. 114 min. (PG-13) LV. \$34.95. MGM/UA.

5. The Woman in Red (-). Color. 1984. Gene Wilder, Charles Grodin, Kelly Le Brock. 87 min. (PG-13) LV. \$34.95. CED. \$29.95. Vestron.

6. Once Upon a Time in America (-). Color. 1983. Robert DeNiro, James Woods, Elizabeth McGovern. 225 min. (original version) LV (CX, closed captions). \$39.98. Warner.

7. The Neverending Story (9). Color. 1984. Barret Oliver, Noah Hathaway, Tami Stronach. 94 min. (PG) LV (stereo, CX, closed captions). \$34.98. CED. \$29.98. Warner.

8. Oh, God! You Devil (-). Color. 1984. George Burns, Ted Wass, Ron Silver. 96 min. (PG) LV (closed captions). \$34.98. Warner.

9. The Adventures of Buckaroo Bonzai (-). Color. 1984. Peter Weller, John Lithgow. 103 min. (PG) LV (stereo). \$34.95. CED. \$29.95. Vestron.

10. Tightrope (5). Color. 1984. Clint Eastwood, Genevieve Bujold, Alison East-

wood. 115 min. (R) LV. \$34.98. Warner.

Cassette Rentals

1. The Terminator (4)*. Color. 1985. Arnold Schwarzenegger, Michael Biehn, Linda Hamilton. 108 min. (R) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$79.95. Thorn EMI.

2. Cotton Club (-). Color. 1984. Richard Gere, Gregory Hines, Diane Lane. (R) Beta (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captions). VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, CX, cl. cap.). \$79.95. Embassy.

3. Teachers (-). Color. 1984. Nick Nolte, JoBeth Williams, Judd Hirsch. 106 min. (R) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captions). \$79.98. CBS/Fox.

4. Body Double (-). Color. Craig Wasson, Melanie Griffith. 114 min. (R) Beta (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captions). VHS (Dolby Hi-Fi stereo, cl. cap.). \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

5. Bachelor Party (2). Color. 1984. Tom Hanks, Tawny Kitaen, George Grizzard. 105 min. (R) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captions). \$79.95. CBS/Fox.

6. Revenge of the Nerds (1). Color. 1984. Robert Carradine, Anthony Edwards, Ted McGinley. 89 min. (R) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captions). \$79.95. CBS/Fox.

7. Country (3). Color. 1984. Jessica Lange, Sam Shepard, Wilford Brimley. 109 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Touchstone.

8. Supergirl (-). Color. 1984. Faye Dunaway, Helen Slater, Peter O'Toole. 105 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$79.95. U.S.A.

9. Police Academy (6). As above, "Videodisc Sales." Beta, VHS (closed captions). \$79.95. Warner.

10. The Pope of Greenwich Village (-). Color. 1984. Mickey Rourke, Eric Roberts, Daryl Hannah. 120 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. MGM/UA.

*Number in parentheses indicates position last month; (-) indicates program is new listing. Copyright 1985 by Billboard Publications. Reprinted by permission.

R E V I E W S



FILM CLIPS

Produced for Theaters



The Graduate

Color. 1967. Dustin Hoffman, Anne Bancroft, Katharine Ross; dir. Mike Nichols. 105 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Embassy. CED. \$19.98. Avco. Reproduction: B

Anyone who thinks a "youth movie" is something like *Revenge of the Nerds* should have been around in 1967. It was a watershed year for movies as well as for young Americans. The Woodstock generation was just starting college and though Woodstock and Vietnam (the larger part of it anyway) hadn't yet happened, the society of kids who would soon begin questioning, protesting, and dropping out was quietly forming. Suddenly *The Graduate* appeared and spoke to that disaffection.

College students all over the country flocked to see it again and again. Critic Hollis Alpert wrote at the time of his amazement: that 19- and 20-year-olds (of all people!) would stand in line for hours to see a movie (of all things!); that they so strongly identified with Benjamin Brad-

hangups"; and that "generation-gappers who love this film regard this sense of estrangement as natural and normal." Not only was it natural and normal, it was nothing compared to what lay ahead—when ennui would turn into anger. *The Graduate*—though we laughed loud and long at it—mobilized young people (and the movies) in a way that seems hard to appreciate in these days of impersonal high-tech cinema. Sure, there are cult films today, but the cult that grew up around *The Graduate* was born of our own uncertainty.

Benjamin, a little worried about his future, spends the summer after his graduation drifting in the family pool. When his dad asks him what he thought all those years of college were for, Benjamin squints into the sun and replies, "Ya got me." (Yuppies, bear with me. I know this is hard to swallow.) Finally his confusion, and the contempt he feels for his family's exhibitionistic pride in his college accomplishments, drives him into the predatory arms of Mrs. Robinson, his father's business

partner's unhappy wife. The first half of *The Graduate* is a black comedy about Benjamin and Mrs. Robinson. The second is romantic: Benjamin falls in love with Mrs. Robinson's daughter Elaine.

How does it look today? Still brilliantly cast and acted, especially by Dustin Hoffman and Anne Bancroft. The seduction and ensuing assignation are helped immeasurably by director Mike Nichols—one can almost see Nichols and Elaine May improvising it—but Hoffman and Bancroft also have breathtaking timing and dazzling comedic range. Perhaps Nichols' direction is occasionally flashy, though the editing seemed modern and exciting at the time. (Put *The Graduate* in perspective: its competitors as "Best Picture" that year included *Doctor Dolittle* and *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?*) Still, its documentation of Benjamin's travels toward a tentative future were so in tune with the times (and with Simon & Garfunkel's pop soundtrack) that *The Graduate* transcends any cinematic self-consciousness that might momentarily intrude.

It is, of course, a period piece. Were *The Graduate* to be made today it would veer off sharply in a different direction about 10 minutes into the film, when a hotshot executive corners Benjamin by the swimming pool and suggests the key to his future in "just one word: plastics." Today a 1985 graduate might respond, "Can you get me an interview?" In 1967 we just laughed and laughed.

Embassy's new VHS release probably looks a lot better than the old Magnetic Video version—what doesn't?—but inappropriate light flashes as well as maladroit scanning prompt a demerit or two. A couple of highway shots look stretched and distorted; I don't remember Nichols using an unusual lens. And though the packaging promotes Hi-Fi, this track is anything but. Sound is mediocre at best.

—Harvey Elliott



Nineteen Eighty-Four

Color. 1984. John Hurt, Suzanna Hamilton, Richard Burton, Cyril Cusack, Bob Flag; dir. Michael Radford. 115 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. U.S.A. Reproduction: B+

George Orwell's 1948 novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* remains one of the most powerful literary works of our century. His vision of a totalitarian future, prompted by the changing world of the '40s, is oppressively heavyhanded but all the more potent for being that: Orwell's paranoia was an appropriate response to the times. Yet because of this, the book remains powerful as an icon—not as a work of living literature.

Director Michael Radford recognized this and did not try to film an update of the novel. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the movie, is not about totalitarianism but about *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the book. It adheres to a '40s vision of the future: shabby, war-torn, monolithically mechanical (as opposed to cleanly electronic). And it incorporates Orwell's chilling but clumsy images of the regime and Big Brother.

That is the principal strength and weakness of the film. Visually Radford's adaptation has an uncommon integrity. His portrait of an industrial society in a state of collapse is stunning. Steam engines, cumbersome dial phones, and low-tech video screens form an intensely bleak backdrop for one couple's doomed defiance of Big Brother. But because the vision isn't updated to accommodate recent history, the threat of Big Brother watching us has no impact—so the heavyhanded paranoia has no justifying relevance. When Winston Smith (John Hurt) is gruesomely and gratuitously tortured for sexcrimes and thoughtcrimes, there is no catharsis. His cause is without romance; his oppressors are indomitable. A rethinking of totalitarianism as it threatens our world today would have made the movie more directly compelling.

The VHS transfer is fine. The subdued colors lose nothing. And there is a pleasant

irony in using a benign application of TV technology to observe its uglier brother.

—John Leland

The Razor's Edge

Color. 1984. Bill Murray, Theresa Russell, Catherine Hicks, Denholm Elliott; dir. John Byrum. 129 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95./LV. \$34.95. CED. \$39.95. RCA/Columbia. Reproduction: A-

The Letter

B&W. 1940. Bette Davis, Herbert Marshall, James Stephenson, Gale Sondergaard; dir. William Wyler. 96 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.98. Key. Reproduction: A

Bette Davis could do Somerset Maugham with impeccable style. Bill Murray, it seems, can't.

In *The Letter* Davis plays a woman no less insidious than her Mildred in *Of Human Bondage* but, elevated in class and shrouded in repression, she's much less honest about her bad nature. As the wife of a Malayan rubber-plantation man Davis shoots his best friend, claiming he was forcing himself upon her. This being the British Empire and she a proper lady, everyone believes her—especially her hus-

band (Herbert Marshall).

What they don't know a mysterious Malaysian woman seems eager to tell them: Davis and the man were lovers, and she—the friend's backstreet native wife—has a letter proving it. It's blackmail and retribution from then on, but William Wyler directs this humid tale with such atmospheric mumbojumbo that we're hooked, unsympathetic though Davis may be. Though Maugham's most moral character is the defense lawyer who doesn't think Davis' honor is worth protecting, it's the immoral heroine Wyler seems to favor. And from the dynamic opening sequence, where Davis fires a series of bullets while striding sideways on the plantation veranda to her wretched drawing-room confession that she still loves the dead man, she gives *The Letter* a classic style that befits its rather outdated outrage.

Bill Murray—in the ill-advised remake of *The Razor's Edge*, which vanished from movie theaters soon after it appeared—has his own style, which resembles nothing classic. His offhand contemporary drollery is reflected in the wrong-headed script, which he helped to fashion out of Maugham's philosophical novel. At odds with the film's lush visuals, the words Murray and his fellow actors speak sound more like parody than accurate character observation—and what emerges is, unhappily, something close to a sendup of a pseudoserious potboiler. (Exempt is Denholm Elliott, who is excellent as a wealthy expatriate/benefactor.)

Maugham's hero is looking for values, and after experiencing the futility of war as an ambulance driver in World War I, he goes to Paris and then to the top of the Himalayas—where he obviously sees the light, if not the answer, and burns the pages of his philosophical guidebook. "The path to salvation," he discovers, "is as narrow and as difficult to walk as a razor's edge," and so it seems is the line between comedy and seriousness for Murray, who tries hard but is ultimately unacceptable in this sprawling morality tale.

Old Somerset Maugham is tricky material for the movies; new Somerset Maugham is even trickier. There's a bit of



the melodramatically farfetched about his fiction, especially when brought to life by heavy-breathers. At his best Maugham could write movingly about unhappy relationships and unfulfilled characters, but at his worst he was pretty ridiculous.

These two new VHS releases are well-produced, with a good source print used for *The Letter*. The widescreen *Razor's Edge* occasionally reveals a disturbing decision not to scan, leaving us without a visual reference point. Color reproduction, however, is lovely and well-modulated.

—Harvey Elliott

The Bostonians

Color. 1984. Vanessa Redgrave, Christopher Reeve, Madeleine Potter, Jessica Tandy; dir. James Ivory. 123 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95./LV. \$34.98. CED. \$29.95. Vestron. Reproduction: B

James Ivory has so much taste it's stifling. Watching his painterly, dignified, literary movies with their accomplished actors speaking sensible words, the intellectually alert filmgoer begins to feel guilty about not liking them better. But Ivory's cinema is not really cinema at all. He's the sort of director for whom museum retrospectives are designed. See the movie fit neatly into the general pattern of his work, and look at them all together—just hanging there.

The Bostonians is about a small, dedicated sect of female emancipationists in Boston toward the end of the 19th century who are mobilized—though that's a pretty vigorous verb to employ where these static characters are concerned—by a young, pretty, vivacious mouthpiece named Verena. Into the lives of Verena and her adoptive mentor, Olive Chancellor, comes Olive's skeptical Southern gentleman of a cousin, who disrupts the feminist game plan by sweeping Verena off her feet. The poor girl is torn between love and duty. And Henry James keeps her dancing between fraud and sainthood before tossing her, finally, to the charming Mr. Ransome.

Despite good performances by Vanessa Redgrave as Olive, Christopher Reeve as the mild-mannered subversive, and Madeleine Potter (who is charismatic though mannered) as Verena, Ivory's bloodlessness eventually does him in. And while critics have applauded his adaptation of Henry James' novel, I can't see a reason for praising fidelity *per se*. Books were meant to be read, not projected onto a screen. And if they are to be translated into another medium (theater, cinema), at least let them be filtered through an alternative imagination rather than one relying on the author's. This may sound heretical; am I saying that bastardized James is better than pure James? All I know is that I enjoyed Peter Bogdanovich's *Daisy Miller* a hell of a lot more than James Ivory's *The Bostonians*; Bogdanovich made a movie, and Ivory did a rendition. His attention to detail is punctilious, the social milieu thoughtfully reproduced, and his characters properly reactive, but after awhile I began to look for the velvet ropes separating the waxworks from the tourists.

Despite some pretty landscapes, Vestron's VHS transfer of *The Bostonians* often looks dingy and dull, with inconsistent color quality and a tendency toward brown. A booming pipe organ opens *The Bostonians* with some nice *basso profundo*. Enjoy the noise; it's as lively as the movie gets.

—Harvey Elliott

Red Dawn

Color. 1984. Patrick Swayze, Lea Thompson, C. Thomas Howell; dir. John Milius. 114 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95./LV. \$34.95. MGM/UA. Reproduction: A

Raise your hand if you remember *Invasion, U.S.A.* The invasion film died out with the Kennedy era, except for its science-fiction incarnations. But now it's the Reagan era and John Milius is resurrecting the genre.

Red Dawn is part science fiction, looking forward to the opening days of World War

III. No nuclear conflict this; with 500,000 Cuban and Nicaraguan troops on its side, Russia decides America is ripe for invasion and paratroopers descend on Colorado schoolyards—slaughtering teachers and prompting several teenagers to run for the hills and form the Wolverines, a guerrilla team arrayed against the occupying forces. You might guess it's a parable about the pitfalls of liberalism—the invaders even use our handgun-registration records against us—but it's also a plea to the G.I. Joe generation to prepare for the inevitable conflict.

And it's convincing, as one-dimensional films usually are. Later action is mere wish-fulfillment, but the schoolyard invasion is beautifully staged and chillingly realistic. And Milius throws a few curveballs to keep things interesting, deftly subtexting his invasion saga with rites-of-passage nature mysticism, the paganism underlying all his work. Cameos by the likes of Ben Johnson and Harry Dean Stanton are more memorable than the Identikit youth cast. Offbeat supporting characters include Powers Boothe as an oddly pragmatic stranded Texas pilot who underscores the toy aspect of the whole film, and Ron O'Neal as a Nicaraguan commander who silently identifies with the guerrillas.

But Milius overloads his deck, the questions outweigh the plausibility, and the invasion becomes little more than a whetstone on which to hone the American spirit. Even with superb sound and VHS picture, Milius' macho lie resounds: muscle is everything, though it ultimately destroys itself.

—Steven Grant

Kings Row

B&W. 1941. Robert Cummings, Ronald Reagan, Ann Sheridan; dir. Sam Wood. 127 minutes. Beta, VHS. \$59.98. Key. Reproduction: B

Ever want to see Ronald Reagan act well? This is it. The story of two boys (Cummings and Reagan) growing into men, *Kings Row* is MGM at its corniest but somehow most effective. Both are orphaned scions of high society raised by maternal relatives in a sleepy turn-of-the-century Anytown USA. Cummings flees to Vienna to study with Sigmund Freud following the death of his girl, while Reagan loses his fortune and is forced into working and the arms of a worker's daughter (Ann Sheridan). From then on things get even more peculiar, and Cummings must return to uncover the town's darkest secrets and cure everyone with his new science of psychiatry.

Odds are that *Kings Row*, a spiritual predecessor to *Peyton Place*, is the reason Reagan thinks he understands the plight of America's poor. But he's great here—for once—easily outshining leading-man Cummings with sureness and humor, and both he and Sheridan surmount the maudlin material with grace. Otherwise, the film suffers with age. The early use of psychiatry is impressive but uneducated, and,





Citizen Kane

despite a nod to the good-natured tenacity of the proletariat, its sympathies (and hopes for salvation) lie with the considerably more brutal upper crust. The grim story is also hindered by long banal monologues, Cummings' befuddled acting, and erratic print quality.

Still, *King's Row* attempts, however clumsily, to celebrate the human spirit—which is more than you can say for *Dynasty*—and therein lies its slight charm. Mediocre art and politically curious artifact, it nonetheless remains at the top of the soap-opera genre. —Steven Grant

Millhouse: A White Comedy

Color. 1971. 93 min. Beta, VHS. \$75. New Video (90 University Pl., N.Y.C. 10003; 212-243-0400). Reproduction: B +

Emil de Antonio, the independent and alternate filmmaker, apparently has a fascination for Richard Milhous Nixon that many others have. I share it. For me, Nixon was an American icon, the antithesis of everything in which I believed in the '60s and early '70s. To this day he continually fascinates me as a political subject. Nixon was a catharsis in a way no other politician was. I really do miss him dearly. I'm sorry he's not here to kick around any more.

What separates de Antonio from the rest of us, however, is what he does with his camera and Moviola. He has assembled vintage Nixon footage, juxtaposed it with interviews with politicians and reporters, and assembled a comic documentary that is truly funny. What is remarkable is that we laugh at Nixon because of his verbal and intellectual buffoonery. Though the film portrays him as a pitiable character, we smile not because of any pity from afar. We smile because it seems incredible what a liar, cheat, and disappointment Nixon was even before Watergate. Remember, de Antonio's documentary was done before we found out Nixon was a crook too.

In a recent letter to *American Film* magazine de Antonio says John Dean tried his hardest to suppress the movie when it was first released. What a compliment. It's all here: the Checkers speech, Julie, Tricia, all Nixon's brilliant psycho-babble.

Also included is the famous concession speech, when Nixon thought he was through with politics.

Encore, de Antonio. I'm waiting anxiously for *Millhouse II*, which could be just as humorous on the Watergate material alone.

—Doug Garr

Citizen Kane

B&W. 1941. Orson Welles, Joseph Cotten, Agnes Moorhead, Dorothy Commingore; dir. Welles. 119 min. LV (CAV). \$89.95. Criterion (Box 2310, Santa Monica, Calif. 90406; 800-446-2001). Reproduction: A -

Of course *Kane* deserves the best possible treatment in video form. This tale of an eccentric, ruthless, complex newspaper publisher (patterned after William Randolph Hearst) was a fantastic showcase not just for Welles and his Mercury Theater company, but for script cowriter Herman Mankiewicz, cameraman Gregg Toland, and composer Bernard Herrmann.

Criterion's *Kane* is a three-disc set mastered in the CAV or "standard play" format to allow use of still frames, chapter numbers, and slow motion so that viewers—film buffs and scholars—can further appreciate the film. In addition to the film itself Criterion has created a "visual essay" by film historian Robert Carringer which deals with (in still frames and clips from the movie) the production and some of the controversy surrounding its release. This addition is a good one and amounts to a mini film course. Also included is the original theatrical trailer, which has become something of a legend since copies started surfacing several years ago. It is a true masterpiece both of showbiz promotion and ego gratification for director Welles: All the material in the three-minute trailer was shot especially for it and Welles himself is heard but never seen. He is instead represented by a majestic shot of a studio boom mic that zooms into the cosmos at the end of his pitch.

Film historian and preservationist Ron Haver (who recently reconstructed George Cukor's *A Star Is Born*) supervised *Kane*'s transfer to video. Criterion

says it used a negative from RKO's vaults but does not mention that this is not the original negative. That one was destroyed in a warehouse fire about a decade ago. The video version sparkles, but despite Criterion's claims that "every possible form of enhancement" was used to make it new and shiny, there are still negative scratches and a few noticeable splices. Overall, it is not quite the equal of some older films (like MCA DiscoVision's CAV version of Leo McCarey's *Ruggles of Red Gap*) that have been transferred to disc.

Is the set worth its hefty pricetag, however? Absolutely. It is the ultimate video version of what may be the ultimate movie.

—Tim Onosko

The Private Life Of Sherlock Holmes

Color. 1970. Robert Stephens, Colin Blakely, Genevieve Page; dir. Billy Wilder. 125 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.98. Key. Reproduction: B +

Filled with the kind of old-world romanticism many moderns can't stand, *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* is one of the more tragic modern films for two reasons: because the story deals with Holmes' utter irrelevance to the monolithic evils of the 20th century, making the very funny movie a "tragedy," and because the released version (theatrical and video) is only about three-fifths of the movie Wilder made. The grand plan for the movie, apparent if you look hard, is lost—and with it more scenes of the best Holmes/Watson duo ever paired.

The story is reasonably simple as far as Holmesian entertainments go: a beautiful amnesiac *femme belge* falls into 221B Baker Street prattling on about her missing husband. Finding him, which involves nearly every clue mentioned, no matter how tangential-seeming, takes them to Loch Ness where the monster (and Queen Victoria) show up not only Holmes but his brother Mycroft as well—all part of a world situation that is too complex and too out of control for any of their 19th-century minds to fully grasp. Jump-shifted brilliantly into a metaphor for modern international politics and cold-war diplomatic blindness, this political incisiveness overlays and augments the movie's nostalgic beauty and grace.

Like Wilder's equally underrated *Fedora*, *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* is a true masterpiece comparable to the philosophical and meditative novels of E.M. Forster in tone, scope, and complex grandeur. Moreover, like Forster it is often misunderstood by those who miss the sturdy frame on which some of the more sentimental filigrees are worked.

Key Video has done a fine job here, particularly with the audio mix of Miklos Rosza's wonderful score. And if the whole seems a bit cramped at times, it is almost always the problem of the medium rather than the careful VHS transfer.

—M. George Stevenson

QUICK TAKES/FILM

Gone with the Wind

Color. 1939. Clark Gable, Vivien Leigh; **dir.** Victor Fleming. 231 min. Beta, VHS. \$89.95./LV. \$49.95. CED. \$39.95. MGM/UA. **Reproduction:** B-

All that fuss over *this*? The much-heralded video release of *GWTW* in a newly discovered direct-from-the-salt-mines internegative (see February 1985 story) is a bust. Avidly unwrapping a sparkling new LV disc that promised the best-looking *GWTW* we had ever seen, I spent the next four hours watching people's hair change color, scrambling for my color controls so that Atlanta burned gold and not red, worrying about the frequent double-printing of frames that caused little freeze-frame effects to appear throughout, and—worst of all—straining to hear the dialogue above the dirtiest soundtrack I've ever heard. Two-thirds of the way through *GWTW* I was convinced Tara and Atlanta must both be by the seashore, so unrelenting was the roar of 'track noise. Though some sections were good, with especially creamy skin tones for Scarlett, more often I was irritated by the varicolored biases cast over the film. Color enhancement was often excessive and artificial. And who came up with that church-organ *entr'acte* music? With an unimportant release, I wouldn't feel so cheated. But with *Gone with the Wind*, frankly, I do give a damn.

—Harvey Elliott

Choose Me

Color. 1984. Keith Carradine, Lesley Ann Warren, Genevieve Bujold; **dir.** Alan Rudolph. 106 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Media. **Reproduction:** A

Writer/director Alan Rudolph must've mainlined Robert Altman's *Nashville* at an early age. *Choose Me*, like Rudolph's earlier *Welcome to L.A.* and *Remember My Name*, is a semi-coherent slice of life, this one intertwining the lives of a psychward outpatient, barmaid, talkshow host, would-be poet, and mobster, with *One from the Heart* visuals and *Three's Company* plot development. The characters' angsts are too sketchily drawn for the resolutions, such as they are, to mean much and Rudolph's cool, stylized viewpoint is too distancing. But there's some good acting and dialogue among all the enigmas. A curious film.

—Steven Grant

Protocol

Color. 1984. Goldie Hawn, Chris Sarandon, Richard Romanus; **dir.** Herbert Ross. 96 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95./LV. \$34.98. CED. \$29.95. Warner. **Reproduction:** A

Protocol, I'll wager, was not made by Goldie Hawn and Herbert Ross and Buck Henry and a lot of other people who should know better. It looks like a movie made by



computer: *Private Benjamin Goes to Washington*. Substitute the diplomatic corps for the Army, toss in corrupt politicians and shifty Arabs so Goldie has someone to turn the tables on, and swing in for a big '80s-style patriotic ending that would almost make Frank Capra ashamed. All of it's well-thought-out and programmed, without any honesty or heart whatsoever, and with one big problem: it isn't funny. (Printouts rarely are.) For what it's worth—and that certainly isn't \$79.95—the VHS transfer is faultless.

—Harvey Elliott

No Small Affair

Color. 1984. Jon Cryer, Demi Moore, George Wendt; **dir.** Jerry Schatzberg. 102 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. RCA/Columbia. **Reproduction:** A-

"Sixteen years old and obsessed—with photography." Poor Charles Cummings, immune to the more passionate pulls of his years: although he does observe, *re* sex and snaps, that "both are done alone and both require a steady hand." Over the course of *No Small Affair* he learns the less isolationist uses of a dark room with the help of older rock singer Laura Victor. The film is part comedy (which is to say the humor runs out halfway through), part light romance (the spunk hangs in there to the three-quarter mark), and part sensitive portrayal of a boy's coming of age (gag). The supporting characters are all drawn as goony cartoons and the leads spout amorous clichés. Laura's band plays hackneyed sludge. The film isn't bad, but it hasn't got the vibrancy to which it aspires.

—John Leland

Sunday Bloody Sunday

Color. 1971. Peter Finch, Glenda Jackson, Murray Head; **dir.** John Schlesinger. 110 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.98. Key. **Reproduction:** A-

Fans of sensationalism will be disappointed by *Sunday Bloody Sunday*, one of

the first major films to wrestle with bisexuality. A man and a woman are both in love with the same man, with tragic results, and it's all handled veddy tastefully—too tastefully, in fact, as if Schlesinger wanted to prove that bisexuals are just as dull as anyone else. Glenda Jackson is a marvel to behold, and Finch is in top form, but Head is so comatose that his character's appeal is elusive, and the lack of chemistry bleeds off whatever adrenaline the film might have. But tastefully.

—Steven Grant

Black Like Me

B&W. 1964. James Whitmore, Sorrell Booke, Al Freeman Jr.; **dir.** Carl Lerner. 107 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Continental. **Reproduction:** A-

Black Like Me is the true story of journalist John Howard Griffin's attempt to study race relations in the segregated South by dying his skin black. As played by James Whitmore, Griffin is angst-ridden, motivated, and extremely self-righteous—at one point he says he's doing it all for the sake of his children. He also takes offense quickly at insults directed at his chemically tinted skin, indicating either that Griffin identified deeply with his character or that director Lerner wanted to play both sides of the situation. The earnestness of the film is affecting and it exposes an ugly side of American life. But Lerner is overly obsessed with interracial sex (a sensationalistic topic) and Whitmore is hopelessly Caucasoid. Overreaching.

—John Leland

The Falcon Takes Over/Strange Bargain

B&W. 1942/1949. George Sanders, Ward Bond, Allen Jenkins; **dir.** Irving Reis./Jeffrey Lynn, Martha Scott, Harry Morgan; **dir.** Will Price. 131 min. total. Beta, VHS. \$34.95. RKO. **Reproduction:** A

If you don't want to see the first title in this twofer to witness the immortal Sanders in his serial role as a king-of-suave playboy detective who steals kisses between bouts of criminal-foiling, give it a whirl just to hear the blonde tell him, "I'm not in the habit of checking into people's pasts—especially when they rumba well." Murder-mystery-as-comic-self-parody has never been so appealing. *M*A*S*H*'s Harry Morgan is a more serious kind of detective in the second half of this double bill, a complex but well-plotted suspenser about a family man who grapples impotently with corruption and intrigue. The plot and theme are a variation on Claude Rains' situation in *The Paris Express* (see "Quick Takes/Film," March 1985).

—Mark Fleischmann

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quotes *Smulder's* hairpin somoquy and that quote dictates the action's growth as basically as a genetic code: "Two prongs, one pin. It is two but it is one. Now I straighten it and it is a single piece. If I bend it then it is two without ceasing to be one. But I break it off here. Then there are two."

As Henrik absorbs the young actress's unsettled recollection of her parents, he recalls his own relationship to them and to her mother in particular. Rakel, the mother, woozily clipclops onto the stage and holds up a verbal mirror to the whole proceeding. It is of course a scene from another era, but one that slowly illuminates Henrik's relationship with the hapless Anna.

Sound like your cup of kirsch? *After the Rehearsal* is grimly lyrical in contrast to Bergman's most celebrated TV vehicle, *Scenes from a Marriage*. But as such it works well on the small screen for which it was created. The actors, Josephson in particular, are well worth observing through lines like "It's death nibbling at me." To English-speaking audiences Bergman generally offers a one-of-a-kind vision that must be adjusted to, and *After the Rehearsal* is no exception.

The VHS reproduction has a soft warm look that makes the harshness of the material a little easier on the brain. The subtitles are clearly printed, although at one point Josephson utters a clearly portentous line that is not picked up at the bottom of the

counterparts, this is the perfect time to study the keepers of the beat.

These two tapes offer different perspectives. *Bruford & the Beat* is a video portrait of Bill Bruford, the pioneering rhythm master of Yes and later King Crimson. It should be stimulating viewing for anyone interested in the creative construction of a progressive rock band. Drummers should see it; they should also get their bandmates to see it. *Double Bass Drumming* is an instructional tape strictly for drummers—and only for those who want to learn to use a second bass drum.

Bill Bruford is one of the most imagina-

tripp and Adrian Belew (along with Tony Levin on the basslike Chapman stick) create complex lines around Bruford's beat, the drummer emerges as the rhythmic and thematic core of the ensemble. Bruford is a brilliant ensemble player. This tape illustrates how liberating that can be.

Double Bass Drumming works like an exercise tape. Few things are more exciting than unveiling your new traffic-stopping figure or driving your band through a rousing live set. On the other hand, few activities are more tedious than exercising or practicing the drums. Both require either a zen-like tolerance for boredom or an out-

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—Harvey Elliott

Choose Me

Color. 1984. Keith Carradine, Lesley Ann Warren, Genevieve Bujold; dir. Alan Rudolph. 106 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Media. Reproduction: A

Writer/director Alan Rudolph must've mainlined Robert Altman's *Nashville* at an early age. *Choose Me*, like Rudolph's earlier *Welcome to L.A.* and *Remember My Name*, is a semi-coherent slice of life, this one intertwining the lives of a psychward outpatient, barmaid, talkshow host, would-be poet, and mobster, with *One from the Heart* visuals and *Three's Company* plot development. The characters' angsts are too sketchily drawn for the resolutions, such as they are, to mean much and Rudolph's cool, stylized viewpoint is too distancing. But there's some good acting and dialogue among all the enigmas. A curious film.

—Steven Grant

Protocol

Color. 1984. Goldie Hawn, Chris Sarandon, Richard Romanus; dir. Herbert Ross. 96 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95./LV. \$34.98. CED. \$29.95. Warner. Reproduction: A

Protocol, I'll wager, was not made by Goldie Hawn and Herbert Ross and Buck Henry and a lot of other people who should know better. It looks like a movie made by

No Small Affair

Color. 1984. Jon Cryer, Demi Moore, George Wendt; dir. Jerry Schatzberg. 102 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95. RCA/Columbia. Reproduction: A —

"Sixteen years old and obsessed—with photography." Poor Charles Cummings, immune to the more passionate pulls of his years: although he does observe, *re* sex and snaps, that "both are done alone and both require a steady hand." Over the course of *No Small Affair* he learns the less isolationist uses of a dark room with the help of older rock singer Laura Victor. The film is part comedy (which is to say the humor runs out halfway through), part light romance (the spunk hangs in there to the three-quarter mark), and part sensitive portrayal of a boy's coming of age (gag). The supporting characters are all drawn as goony cartoons and the leads spout amorous clichés. Laura's band plays hackneyed sludge. The film isn't bad, but it hasn't got the vibrancy to which it aspires.

—John Leland

Sunday Bloody Sunday

Color. 1971. Peter Finch, Glenda Jackson, Murray Head; dir. John Schlesinger. 110 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.98. Key. Reproduction: A —

Fans of sensationalism will be disappointed by *Sunday Bloody Sunday*, one of

poses an ugly side of American life. But Lerner is overly obsessed with interracial sex (a sensationalistic topic) and Whitmore is hopelessly Caucasoid. Overreaching.

—John Leland

The Falcon Takes Over/ Strange Bargain

B&W. 1942/1949. George Sanders, Ward Bond, Allen Jenkins; dir. Irving Reis./Jeffrey Lynn, Martha Scott, Harry Morgan; dir. Will Price. 131 min. total. Beta, VHS. \$34.95. RKO. Reproduction: A

If you don't want to see the first title in this twofer to witness the immortal Sanders in his serial role as a king-of-suave playboy detective who steals kisses between bouts of criminal-foiling, give it a whirl just to hear the blonde tell him, "I'm not in the habit of checking into people's pasts—especially when they rhumba well." Murder-mystery-as-comic-self-parody has never been so appealing. *M*A*S*H*'s Harry Morgan is a more serious kind of detective in the second half of this double bill, a complex but well-plotted suspenser about a family man who grapples impotently with corruption and intrigue. The plot and theme are a variation on Claude Rains' situation in *The Paris Express* (see "Quick Takes/Film," March 1985).

—Mark Fleischmann

VIDEO CLIPS

Produced for Home Viewing

After the Rehearsal

Color. 1983. Erland Josephson, Lena Olin, Ingrid Thulin; dir. Ingmar Bergman. 74 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. RCA/Columbia.

If all the world's a stage, who gets to direct? The answer, obviously, is Ingmar Bergman. One of the few auteurs willing to dive into the murky depths of the human dilemma without a snorkel, Bergman has been both idolized and parodied for most of his career, justifiably about half the time. *After the Rehearsal* is a short made-for-TV movie replete with many Bergman traditions: right-in-your-face photography by Sven Nykvist, English subtitles that betray the stiffness of translating Swedish, and a plot that is nonlinear in the real world but straight as an arrow in the context of memory and emotion.

The setting is an off-duty stage on which an aging director paternally patronizes the kittenish lead in his production of Strindberg's *Dream Play*. Henrik, the director, quotes Strindberg's "hairpin" soliloquy and that quote dictates the action's growth as basically as a genetic code: "Two prongs, one pin. It is two but it is one. Now I straighten it and it is a single piece. If I bend it then it is two without ceasing to be one. But I break it off here. Then there are two."

As Henrik absorbs the young actress's unsettled recollection of her parents, he recalls his own relationship to them and to her mother in particular. Rakel, the mother, woozily clipclops onto the stage and holds up a verbal mirror to the whole proceeding. It is of course a scene from another era, but one that slowly illuminates Henrik's relationship with the hapless Anna.

Sound like your cup of kirsch? *After the Rehearsal* is grimly lyrical in contrast to Bergman's most celebrated TV vehicle, *Scenes from a Marriage*. But as such it works well on the small screen for which it was created. The actors, Josephson in particular, are well worth observing through lines like "It's death nibbling at me." To English-speaking audiences Bergman generally offers a one-of-a-kind vision that must be adjusted to, and *After the Rehearsal* is no exception.

The VHS reproduction has a soft warm look that makes the harshness of the material a little easier on the brain. The subtitles are clearly printed, although at one point Josephson utters a clearly portentous line that is not picked up at the bottom of the

screen, leaving the viewer to guess what he is saying. But what other kind of technical error could be more appropriate in a Bergman film? —John Walker

Bruford & the Beat

Color. 1982. Bill Bruford, Steve Howe, Robert Fripp, King Crimson; exec. prod. Max Roach. 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$74. Axis (Casino Percussion Products, Box 372, Plainview, N.Y. 11803; 516-221-3636).

Double Bass Drumming

Color. 1984. Joe Franco, Chilliwack. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$57. Axis.

Drummers are the least understood of the boys in the band. While guitarists and singers primp for the audience, drummers flail as much for their bandmates as for the fans, and provide the center to which everything should adhere. If a band is tight live, its members are probably good at listening to the drummer. With drum computers threatening to replace their human counterparts, this is the perfect time to study the keepers of the beat.

These two tapes offer different perspectives. *Bruford & the Beat* is a video portrait of Bill Bruford, the pioneering rhythm master of Yes and later King Crimson. It should be stimulating viewing for anyone interested in the creative construction of a progressive rock band. Drummers should see it; they should also get their bandmates to see it. *Double Bass Drumming* is an instructional tape strictly for drummers—and only for those who want to learn to use a second bass drum.

Bill Bruford is one of the most imagina-

tive drummers in rock. His unique use of dynamics, timber, and polyrhythms give his playing an almost symphonic sound. He provided the jackhammer drive of Yes in its glory days (if you accept such a proposition) and now supplies the rhythmic complexities underpinning King Crimson's creative improvisations.

In *Bruford & the Beat* he talks about what he does and why he does it, and some of his more illustrious colleagues chip in their praises. Demonstrating the language of drumming as applied to the solo, Bruford shows himself to be alternately brilliant and—for all his formidable technique—unfocused. I never said he was a brilliant soloist. The strength of the half-hour program is a segment entitled "The Rhythm of Discipline." The drummer demonstrates the genesis of a 17-on-4 polyrhythm and shows how he might orchestrate and embellish it. Then cut to Crimson playing "Discipline," based on this rhythm. As guitarists Robert Fripp and Adrian Belew (along with Tony Levin on the basslike Chapman stick) create complex lines around Bruford's beat, the drummer emerges as the rhythmic and thematic core of the ensemble. Bruford is a brilliant ensemble player. This tape illustrates how liberating that can be.

Double Bass Drumming works like an exercise tape. Few things are more exciting than unveiling your new traffic-stopping figure or driving your band through a rousing live set. On the other hand, few activities are more tedious than exercising or practicing the drums. Both require either a zen-like tolerance for boredom or an out-



side stimulus—like video. Joe Franco's tape is a more interesting presentation of the material covered in his book of the same name. He offers 20 notated patterns for double-bass 16th-note beats and 18 for 8th-note triplets. I followed them using my hi-hat instead of a second bass drum: the patterns were clear and followed a logical progression. None, however, convinced me of the value of using two bass drums. Bear in mind that Franco kicks his bass drums for sludge titans Chilliwack; his aesthetics are antiquated and tumescent. But if you want to add a second bass drum, this tape takes you from the basics (balancing on your stool) to the so-called refinements (carrying 16th-note, 32nd-note, and 8th-note triplet rolls on both feet and hands).

Me, I learned more from throwing away my tomtoms than from pretending I had a second bass drum. Franco is long on technique and short on style. If you fall into this trap, you'll be the first drummer on your block to be replaced by a computer.

—John Leland

Joni Mitchell: Refuge of the Roads

Color. 1984. Mitchell, Larry Klein, Michael Landau, Vinnie Colaiuta, Russell Ferrante; dir. Mitchell. 59 min. LV (CLV). \$24.95. Pioneer Artists.

"...For the road is life": the Gospel according to Jack Kerouac. To jazz-pop auteurist Joni Mitchell on her second concert video, the road is rather an escape from life. And the "refuge?" Simply, sadly, her limousine—from which she views factory towns and gas stations through jaundiced anthropologist's eyes.

Mitchell travels from show to show with a band notably undistinguished compared to the Olympian ensemble of her previous *Shadows and Light*. The mood she's chasing here is darker, almost joyless. Her painterly conceptual footage (from the films *Koyaanisqatsi*, *Viridiana*, and *Dream of the Wild Horses*, the documentary *Min-gus*, and her own Super-8 work) are violent and surreally absurd. Yet despite her

Digital Dreams

visual ambition, her sure knowledge that straight "concert videos" aren't enough as we grope for a new language, the peaks and valleys of her musical dynamism have been flattened. No matter what the idiom, nearly every song gets the same uptempo delivery by a band that feels compelled to rock out but doesn't know how, though alone at the piano on "He Played Real Good for Free," she momentarily recaptures her singular magic.

Disappointing audio doesn't help. The problem doesn't seem to be in the digitally mastered videodisc itself but in the audio mix by Mitchell, Larry Hirsch, and husband/bassist Larry Klein, which sacrifices Mitchell's vocal punch in favor of a muted blend with the instruments. And the stage lighting by Mark Brickman, who had his glory days with Bruce Springsteen, is far less sculptural than it needs to be for video.

Years ago Mitchell helped pioneer the notion of concert conceptual videos. Other performers and directors are just now discovering what she knew then. But while she's been in her refuge, they've passed her on this particular road.

—Frank Lovece

Digital Dreams

Color. 1983. Bill & Astrid Wyman, James Coburn, Richard O'Brien. 70 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Media.

Bass players always seem to be the normal ones. Look at Paul McCartney, or John Entwistle, or Van Halen's Mike Anthony—

not exactly Mick Jagger material. Yet as Rolling Stones bassist Bill Wyman suggests in this "autobiographical fantasy" (unreleased theatrically in the U.S.), the Micks of the world owe the Wymans *et al.* a bit of thanks. For every yin, he implies, there's a yang, and the guys who hold down the basslines are the ones who give lead players the chance to take flights of fancy.

That Wyman has booked his own flight here is what makes this rich man's home movie intriguing. It helps that he's peopled it with such choice guests as film megastar James Coburn, playing a seedy angel; Richard O'Brien, the butler from *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*; and animator Gerald Scarfe, best known for Pink Floyd's album/film *The Wall* and for a style suspiciously similar to that of illustrator Ralph Steadman. Even Wyman's wife Astrid gets into the act, donning several roles with a deadpan versatility. And there's a cameo by the other relatively suburban Stone, Charlie Watts, and his wife Shirley.

In the midst of these friends and lovers Wyman paints himself as an incorrigible hobbyist who gets interested in fishing and photography and especially computers, and then does each of them to death. He also keeps flashing back to himself as a child in postwar England—Brits just love doing that in films—and reenacts some choice moments from his life. The best is when he tells his boss at some veddy proper job that he wants to leave to pursue rock & roll. Go on, says the irate old coot, and don't come back sniveling for your job. How delicious. Wyman also gives some insight into his early days with the Stones and includes some prehistoric rock video, most notably from a promo film for the *Beggar's Banquet* album.

Digital Dreams comes down, regardless, to Monty Python without the laughs. It does get tedious and precious at times. Choice bits do arise, as when Wyman anticipates Woody Allen's *Purple Rose of Cairo* and has TV-screen characters talking about the "real world out there." But mostly, *Digital Dreams* is the home movie it appears to be—and as in any home movie, the honesty of the "performers" can excuse the rough edges.

—Frank Lovece

The Best of Willie Nelson, Vol. 1

Color, B&W. 1969. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. H. Butrum Enterprises (44 Music Square E., Suite 115, Nashville, Tenn. 37203; 615-242-0377).

Time changes everything, according to the title of a country song recorded by everyone from Western-swing king Bob Wills to bluegrass patriarch Bill Monroe. Time has certainly changed Willie Nelson—in appearance if not in substance. As seen in these performances excerpted from Ernest Tubb's syndicated TV show, Willie looks like a typical Nashville product. Nattily dressed in a conservative suit and with his hair slicked back into a modest pompadour, he represents the image rec-



ord executives thought they could sell in the '60s. But they couldn't sell Willie Nelson. Despite his clean-cut appearance—or maybe because of it—the public rejected him. Although artists like Ray Price and Patsy Cline made huge hits with Willie's songs, when he sang them himself they sank without a trace. By the end of the '60s he'd recorded a dozen flop albums.

Nashville didn't have the answer. What could Nelson do? "The surest way to get someone to listen to you back then was to



grow your hair down to your shoulders, put on an earring, let your beard grow until it's shaggy, and then get up onstage," Willie told writer Jack Hurst in 1979. It took the outlaw image to fix him in the public eye, but Nelson had the musical goods long before his pompadour turned into a ponytail. Backed by Tubb's crack band, Willie's version of "San Antonio Rose" swings with a fierce intensity that actually puts his modern-day arrangements to shame. His deceptive behind-the-beat vocal style at first gives the impression that he has to struggle to equal the song's breakneck tempo. But repeated listenings uncover a playful planned pattern to his syncopation.

Nelson does more standards, including "Born to Lose" and "Columbus Stockade Blues," but his renditions of "Hello, Walls," "Crazy," and others from his own catalogue of masterpieces make this video required viewing. His understated, reserved approach to searingly emotional subjects gives his lyrics a dignity that increases their pathos.

Beyond the timeless appeal of his songwriting, *The Best of Willie Nelson* has a further attraction: it captures Willie just before he fled Nashville and his early straighter-than-straight image. Watch as one of country music's greatest poets gathers his forces for a commercial breakthrough.

—Andrew Roblin

Willie Nelson and Family In Concert

Color. 1984. *Willie Nelson, Grady Martin, Paul English, Jody Payne, Mickey Raphael, Bee Spears, Bobbie Nelson; dir. Allen Muir.* 89 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.98. CBS/Fox.

The opening shots of this live concert gig are a prologue with Willie and friends fooling around on a golf course and in a limousine. But once the music gets going, you know why this crooner owns limos. Willie's got something that everybody wants to see: authenticity.

This down-home visit was originally filmed for a 1983 HBO concert. It reveals—via closeups of his grizzled face and the same old nylon-stringed guitar with the hole in the front where he's rested his fingers for the last 20 years—that Willie Nelson sings the songs the same way if he's in some smoke-filled bar with five people in the audience as when he's playing for the queen. The yeehahs and grins on the faces of the assembled shitkickers in the audience at Austin's Opera House affirm this.

Nelson and his well-rehearsed band (the family of the title) coast through 28 songs, alternating and segueing between stompers like "Old Joe Clark," "Beer-Barrel Polka," and "Mamas, Don't Let Your Boys Grow Up to Be Cowboys" and those old standard ballads that Nelson makes his own—"There Will Never Be Another You," "Georgia," "Always on My Mind." Truth is, Willie Nelson is an old standard. Is it that silken voice? Good bet. It's impressive that something so delicate can cut through all that Lone Star beer and the myriad road-map wrinkles on the man's face.

The sense of intimacy is not lost on the video crew. Camera angles are varied, zooming in on guitar-picking fingers (Willie on amplified acoustic and Grady Martin on a very sweet Les Paul) and cutting to the whole band as the drama builds onstage. The Beta Hi-Fi sound is good for a live show, getting enough of the crowd ambience to make you feel like you're there, but not enough to distract from the music. Individual mic'ing of instruments—especially Raphael's mouth harp and Willie's guitar—shows through in the home media room.

—Noë Goldwasser

Die Fledermaus

Color. 1984. *Opera by Johann Strauss.* 178 min. LV. \$49.95. Pioneer.

If you own a laser player and lately have been wondering why, this may be the answer. Pioneer Artists' Royal Opera House production of *Die Fledermaus*, the Strauss operetta, is an artistic and technical triumph. The international cast includes Kiri te Kanawa, Hermann Prey, Hildegard Heichele, Benjamin Luxon, and (get this) Charles Aznavour. Perhaps the most famous star, however, is Plácido Domingo, who sings not a note: he conducts the Royal Opera orchestra.

The operetta itself is an engaging novelty. Written by the composer who came to be known as the "Waltz King," it was first performed around the time that two Englishmen named William Schwenk Gilbert and Arthur Seymour Sullivan were virtually defining 19th-century operetta. The music in this production includes a lot of Viennese waltzes in addition to more traditional operatic music. Domingo and the orchestra hold their own, to say the least.

Performed in English, German, and a smattering of Italian and French, *Die Fledermaus* tells the tale of a Viennese gentleman heading for jail for insulting a policeman, his wife and maid, and the romantic exploits of the three. As is traditional in opera, cases of mistaken identity abound. I hope this won't spoil it for you, but it has a happy ending. Much of the action is little more than farce—especially the scenes played in German and Italian—but it's well-done and entertaining. The singers are world-class and sound it. As in most modern operettas, more dialogue is spoken than sung.



This disc (actually it takes both sides of two discs to accommodate the three-act, almost three-hour performance) shows the difference between videotape and disc. The image is crystal-clear (perhaps slightly better than standard network programs) and is generally uninterrupted by dropouts or noise. The sound is too good for an average TV: hear it through a hi-fi system. Because the singers are wearing body mics, their position on the stage is not always well-represented in the stereo image—but the quality of the sound is so good, who cares? While serious opera aficionados may dismiss an operetta by a waltz composer, the entire package is first-rate.

—Myron Berger

QUICK TAKES/VIDEO

We Are the World

Color. 1985. Michael Jackson, Lionel Richie, Diana Ross, Bruce Springsteen, Hall & Oates, Tina Turner, others; dir. Tom Trbovich. 33 min. Beta, VHS. \$14.95. RCA/Columbia.

It's hard—but not impossible—to criticize a tape whose proceeds go to fight world hunger. This one suffers from a sanctimoniousness that's as familiar as it is forgivable. There's no hint of disagreements or of country artists' complaints of underrepresentation; about the only human moment comes when everyone cracks up at Cyndi Lauper, something of a court jester anyway, after producer Quincy Jones tells her that her bracelets are jangling into the microphone. The 21 soloists are treated as demigods—yet maybe it's this mythic quality that gives me chills at the end during the finished (albeit ill-synced) video clip. It's an appealing thought that these performers and their managers, publicists, *et al.* gave of themselves for free. So carping notwithstanding, everyone with bucks enough for a VCR should buy this tape.

—Frank Lovece

Madonna

Color. 1985. 18 min. LV. \$16.95. Pioneer.

If you can't wait for Susan Seidelman's *Desperately Seeking Susan* (or the "Into the Groove" edit) to float onto your home screen, this will serve as a Madonna *hors d'oeuvre*. Steve Barron's "Burning Up" shows off the sultry blonde to best effect with its touch of Dali (disembodied eyes), though the chain tightening around her neck and all the rolling on the floor hardly make for a feminist manifesto. But apart from the footage of Venice in Mary Lambert's brilliantly edited "Like a Virgin," there's little in the other three videos to feed your head unless ogling the "material girl" is your only agenda. Like a fool, I didn't quite hear the line in "Borderline" when she sings, "Feel like I'm going to lose my mind"; I thought she said "use my mind." Just goes to show how wrong you can be.

—Mark Fleischmann

The Jam/Video Snap!

Color. 1977-82 (compilation). Dir. various. 70 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Media.

Paul Weller has gone on to more fashionable soul warbling, so it's rather neat to backtrack in history to the beginnings of the English punk scene, watching one of its nattiest groupings metamorphose in these chronologically ordered clips from nihilistic



boomtown snots through Beatlesque adoration (Rickenbackers and McCartney basslines and all) into psychedelic soulfulness and Motown/Philly choirboy aesthetics. Much of this chronicling was directed by the avant wit of British rock video, Tim Pope. His signature camera tosses and image manipulations are everywhere in this Polygram collection.

—Noë Goldwasser

Inside Hitchcock

Color, B&W. 1973. Interview & film clips; prod./writ./dir. Richard Schickel, narr. Cliff Robertson. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Maljack/MPI.

Good and evil "are moving closer together till you can hardly tell one from another." For that wisdom alone—straight from Sir Alfred's lips—this installment of the "Men Who Make the Movies" documentary series is worth seeing. Otherwise, Hitch obsessives won't find much that hasn't been more fully explored in books; Hitch tended to tell the same tales in interviews over the years, and the poorly reproduced film clips are an insult. Novices, however, still might benefit from the elementary film-scholar voiceover narration of snippets from films including *Psycho*, *Notorious*, and such unreleased-on-video titles as *Saboteur* and *Shadow of a Doubt* (not to mention our Hitchcock survey in the June 1985 issue).

—Mark Fleischmann

You and Your Cat

Color. 1985. Dr. Michael Fox. 51 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Video Associates (5419 Sunset Blvd., L.A., Calif. 90027).

Though not all the cast members react well to the lights ("rrrooooooww!"), this made-for-video how-to program heroically redeems its trashy genre. Doctor/writer

Fox covers not only the essential medical problems and tips but pays attention to the too-oft-neglected psychological aspects of cat-fancying—even the most experienced owner will learn something new from the section on touching and massage, in which physical and psychic sensitivity become one. Speaking sometimes extemporaneously and sometimes according to script, Fox is often opinionated—but in the right way ("If you love your cat, keep it indoors"). Only the section on other animals (guinea pigs, hamsters, *et al.*) is expendable. Production values and reproduction are excellent.

—Mark Fleischmann

The Far Pavilions

Color. 1983. Ben Cross, Amy Irving, Omar Sharif; dir. Peter Duffell. 108 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

More India chic. But *The Far Pavilions* isn't *A Passage to India* or *The Jewel in the Crown*, with their aspirations high culture and meaningful commentary on colonial imperialism. It's a flashy made-for-HBO saga, a veritable mini-miniseries, that adheres to all the *sine qua nons* of the genre: mad passions consummated surreptitiously, grandiose pageantry, and swashbuckling action sequences, all with a little exotic foreign-ritual barbarity thrown in for added flavor. In true miniseries style the hopelessly occidental Amy Irving is called on to play the Princess Anjuli. The pageantry is mildly diverting, but Julian Bond's screenplay lacks the steamy heat of, say, *The Thorn Birds*.

—John Leland

Picture Pages Vol. 1

Color. 1985. Bill Cosby. 55 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Disney.

Bill Cosby has the unique ability to fascinate and delight adults with material intended for children. His asinine stories that go nowhere and involve characters you couldn't care less about are charming when delivered in Cos' patronizing kiddie voice. In *Picture Pages*, he uses his charm—and supplementary booklets—to illustrate fundamental ideas like shapes, over/under, inside/outside, and rhymes. His strategy is simple: youngsters draw lines between pictures illustrating like ideas. Each "Picture Page" demonstrates a different concept or pair of concepts and can be part of a daily lesson. The concepts are so basic that parents could also illustrate them with real-life examples. This was the first in what has become a cassette series.

—John Leland

DIRECTORY

New Releases on Tape and Disc

Need a nice way to cool off these hot summer days? Try a liberal dose of comedy, now playing at your local video store. Under youth acting its age you'll find Embassy's *Chicken Chronicles*, Paramount's *French Postcards*, Thorn EMI's *Heaven Help Us*, Buena Vista's *Midnight Madness*, and Lightning Video's *Stuckey's Last Stand*. Under age acting its youth you'll find VidAmerica's *Doctor at Large*, U.S.A.'s *Having It All*, Warner's *Rafferty and the Gold Dust Twins*, and Embassy's *Student Teachers*. For general snafu plots, try VidAmerica's *Barry McKenzie Holds His Own*, Warner's *Great Bank Hoax* and *Protocol*, and RCA/Columbia's *Who's Minding the Mint?* Notable virtuosi include *Best of Shields & Yarnell* and Thorn's marvelous madcaps, Benny Hill and Robert Klein.

Growing interest in the classics is bringing forth some really

superb titles. Don't miss Richard Burton in *Alexander the Great* (1955), Greta Garbo in *Grand Hotel* (1932), Tallulah Bankhead in *Lifeboat* (directed by Alfred Hitchcock in 1944), Lana Turner in *Madam X* (1966), Elizabeth Taylor in *A Place in the Sun* (1951), Ingrid Bergman in *Stromboli* (1950), and Fredric March, Veronica Lake, and Robert Benchley in *I Married a Witch* (1942). Other dog-day picks are *Mephisto*, *Mahler* (directed by Ken Russell), John Belushi in *Old Boyfriends*, and John Sayles' *The Brother from Another Planet*.

This month we welcome a new label, Playhouse Video. Formed by CBS/Fox, Playhouse specializes in family entertainment, and is starting off with a group of *Muppet Show* compilations. This month's gigantic collector, in response to reader requests, is dedicated to John Wayne.

ADVENTURE

Assassination. Color. Jesper Langberg, Paul Hagen, Bert Mejdning. Hunt for assassin. 93 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. TWE.

Birds of Prey. Color. 1973. David Janssen, Elayne Heilveil, Ralph Meeker. Helicopter pilot sees holdup and abduction. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Prism.

Borrowed Trouble. B&W. 1948. Hopalong Cassidy (William Boyd), Andy Clyde, Rand Brooks. Boys get mixed up in small town troubles. 58 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Buena.

The Brothers O'Toole. Color. 1973. John Austin, Steve Carlson, Pat Carroll, Hans Conried, Lee Meriwether. Slick drifters. 94 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. VCI.

Circle of Iron. Color. 1978. Jeff Cooper, David Carradine, Christopher Lee, Roddy McDowall, Eli Wallach, Erica Creer. Young fighter faces combat and temptation. 102 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Embassy.

The Driver. Color. 1978. Ryan O'Neal, Bruce Dern. Detective obsessed with catching getaway



driver. 131 min. (PG) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captions). \$59.98. CBS/Fox.

The Falcon's Adventure/Armored Car Robbery. B&W. 1947/1950. "Falcon's": Tom Conway, Madge Meredith. Rescuing a damsel. "Armored Car": William Talman, Adele Jergens. A smart con, his detective antagonist. 122 min. Beta, VHS. \$34.95. RKO.

French Connection II. Color. 1975. Gene Hackman, Fernando Rey. Tough New York detective goes to Marseilles after heroin

dealer. By John Frankenheimer. 119 min. (R) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captions). \$59.98. CBS/Fox.

H.R. Pufnstuf Volume 2. Color. 1969. Jack Wild, Billie Hayes. Jimmy and Witchepoo in the "Show Biz Witch," "The Mechanical Boy." 46 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Embassy.

Hellriders. Color. Adam West, Tina Louise, Russ Alexander, Renee Harmon. Motorcycle gang terrorizes small town. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. TWE.

High Crime. Color. James Whitmore, Franco Nero, Fernando Rey. Honest cop caught in heroin pipeline. 100 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Media.

Hoppy's Holiday. B&W. 1947. Hopalong Cassidy (William Boyd), Andy Clyde, Rand Brooks. Corruption and double crossing in small town. 59 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Buena.

The Invincible Armor. Color. Liu Chung Liang, Huang Cheng Li, Wang Chiang. Ambitious plot results in confusing murder. 92 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. TWE.

Journey into Fear. B&W. 1943. Orson Welles, Joseph Cotten, Ruth Warrick, Agnes Moorehead, Everett Sloan, Dolores Del Rio. Istanbul—crossroads of international intrigue. 68 min. Beta, VHS. \$34.95. RKO.

The Loners. Color. 1974. Dean Stockwell, Pat Stich, Todd Susman, Scott Brady, Gloria Grahame, Alex Dreier. Young man turns fugitive. 80 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$69.95. VidAmerica.

Madman. Color. 1979. Sigourney Weaver, Michael Beck, F. Murray Abraham. Russian born Jew in Israeli army. 95 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. VCI.

The Man with Bogart's Face. Color. 1980. Robert Sacchi, Misty Rowe, Franco Nero, Michelle Phil-

lips, Olivia Hussey, Victor Buono, Sybil Danning, Herbert Lom. Detective swamped with clients. 106 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.95. Key.

Master Ninja II. Color. Sho Kosugi, Lee Van Cleef, Timothy Van Patten, David McCallum, Cotter Smith. Peers condemn renegade Ninja. Contains "Hostages" with David McCallum, "State of the Union" with Cotter Smith. 92 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. TWE.

The Master Touch. Color. 1972. Kirk Douglas, Florinda Bolkan. Safecracker robs burglar-proof vaults. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Prism.

Mean Dog Blues. Color. 1979. George Kennedy, Gregg Henry, Kay Lenz, Scatman Crothers, Tina Louise, James Wainwright, William Windom. Singer railroaded into prison. 108 min (R) Beta, VHS. Lightning.

Midnight Spares. Color. Bruce Spence, Gia Carides, James Laurie. Hero returns to find that his father has mysteriously disappeared. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. VCL.

Missing In Action. Color. 1984. Chuck Norris, M. Emmet Walsh. American servicemen held captive in Vietnam. 101 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. MGM/UA.

Red Flag: The Ultimate Game. Color. 1981. Barry Bostwick, Joan Van Ark, William Devane, Linden Chiles. Air Force pilots in deadly rivalry. 104 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. U.S.A.

Seven Miles from Alcatraz/Flight from Glory. B&W. 1943/1937. "Seven": James Craig, Frank Jenks, Bonita Granville. Escape from the island penitentiary. "Flight": Onslow Stevens, Chester Morris, Van Heflin, Whitney Bourne. Maverick pilots fly old airplanes over the Andes. 127 min. Beta, VHS. \$34.95. RKO.

The Seven-Ups. Color. 1973. Roy Scheider, Tony Lo Bianco. New York City detectives avenge killing. 109 min. (PG) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captions). \$59.98. CBS/Fox.

Tag: The Assassination Game. Color. 1982. Robert Carradine, Linda Hamilton. Student game takes chilling twist. 92 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Embassy.

COMEDY

An Almost Perfect Affair. Color. 1979. Keith Carradine, Monica Vitti, Raf Vallone. American filmmaker, wife of Italian producer fall in love. 92 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Paramount (drop 8/15/85).

Amos & Andy Comedy Classics. B&W. Freeman Gosden, Charles Correll in three episodes. 70 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Spotlite.

Barry McKenzie Holds His Own. Color. 1985. Barry Humphries, Donald Pleasence, Barry Crocker. Satirist, mistaken for the Queen of England, kidnapped and taken to Transylvania. 93 min. Beta, VHS. \$69.95. VidAmerica.



Best of Shields & Yarnell. Color. 1985. Robert Shields, Lorene Yarnell. Highlights from the 1977-78 CBS broadcast series. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. IMA.

The Best of the Benny Hill Show, Vol. 5. Color. Sketches from the TV series. 97 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

The Chicken Chronicles. Color. 1977. Steven Guttenberg, Phil Silvers, Ed Lauter, Lisa Reeves. High school senior faces graduation. 94 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Embassy.

Doctor at Large. Color. 1957. Dirk Bogarde, Muriel Pavlow, James Robertson. Hopeful surgeon pursues truth, beauty, a sexy lady doctor. 95 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. VidAmerica.

Follow that Camel. Color. 1968. Phil Silvers, Jim Dale, Kenneth Williams, Charles Hawtrey, Joan Sims, Angela Douglas, Anita Harris. The French Foreign Legion, with oases, harem girls, burning sands. 91 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. VidAmerica.

French Postcards. Color. 1980. Marie-France Pisier, Jean Rochefort, Debra Winger, Mandy Patinkin. American college students in Paris. 91 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Paramount (drop 8/15/85).

The Great Bank Haax. Color. 1979. Richard Basehart, Ned Beatty, Burgess Meredith, Michael Murphy, Paul Sand, Charlene Dallas, Arthur Godfrey. Man-

agers rob their own bank as cover-up for embezzler. 89 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Warner.

Having It All. Color. 1982. Dyan Cannon, Hart Bochner, Barry Newman, Melanie Chartoff, Sylvia Sydney. Lady commutes between careers and marriages. 92 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. U.S.A.

Heaven Help Us. Color. Donald Sutherland, John Heard, Andrew McCarthy, Kevin Dillon. Young boys come of age. 102 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$79.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

Hot Shorts. B&W. Phil Austin, Peter Bergman, Phil Proctor. Sendup of classic Saturday matinee cliffhanger serials by the Firesign Theatre. 73 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. RCA/Columbia.

It's in the Bag. B&W. Fred Allen, Jack Benny, Jerry Colonna. Former flea circus operator inherits five chairs, discovers \$30,000 is hidden in one. 87 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Spotlite.

Leave 'em Laughing. Color. 1981. Mickey Rooney, Red Buttons, Anne Jackson, Allen Gornitz, Elisha Cook, William Windom. Clown discovers he has cancer. 103 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. U.S.A.

Meet John Doe. B&W. 1941. Gary Cooper, Barbara Stanwyck, Edward Arnold, Walter Brennan, Spring Byington, James Gleason. Unemployed worker picked as the typical American by a newspaper publisher. By Frank Capra. 123 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. VCI.

Midnight Madness. Color. David Naughton, Stephen Furst, Debra Clinger, Eddie Deezen, Brad Wilkin, Maggie Roswell. College students enter a dusk-to-dawn search for hidden clues. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Buena.

More Candid Camera. Color. 1983. Hosted by Allen Funt. Classics considered too hot for broadcast. 60 min. Beta, VHS. Vestron.

No Time for Sergeants. Color. 1958. Andy Griffith, Myron McCormick, Nick Adams, Murray Hamilton, Don Knotts, Jamie Farr. Backwoods farmboy drafted into the Air Force. By Mervyn Le Roy. 119 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Warner.

Not far Publication. Color. Nancy Allen, David Naughton, Laurence Luckenbill, Alice Ghostley. Reporter by night, campaigner by day. By Paul Bartel. 87 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$69.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

Protocol. Color. 1984. Goldie Hawn, Chris Sarandon, Richard Romanus, Cliff De Young, Gail Strickland. Washington waitress becomes diplomat. 96 min. (PG)

Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captions). \$79.95./LV (stereo, cl. cap.). \$34.98. Warner.

Rafferty and the Gold Dust Twins. Color. 1975. Alan Arkin, Mackenzie Phillips, Sally Kellerman, Alex Rocco, Harry Dean Stanton, Charlie Martin Smith. Floozies take motor vehicle inspector on the ride of his life. 91 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Warner.

The Ritz. Color. 1976. Jack Weston, Jerry Stiller, Rita Moreno, Kaye Ballard, Paul B. Price, Treat Williams, F. Murray Abraham. Sanitation man flees murder-minded brother in law. 91 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Warner.

Robert Klein—Child of the '50s, Man of the '80s. Color. Standup comedy and musical performance. 60 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

Slapstick! B&W. Mack Sennett anthology, with Charles Chaplin, Harold Lloyd, Charley Chase, Buster Keaton, Ben Turpin, Stan Laurel, others. 76 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Spotlite.

Stuckey's Last Stand. Color. 1980. Whit Reinhart, Tom Murray, Rich Cosentino. Counselors battle charges at summer camp. 95 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. Lightning.

The Student Teachers. Color. 1973. Faculty spice up Valley High. 79 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Embassy.

Three Stooges Comedy Classics. B&W. Moe, Larry, Shemp. Curley in 5 shorts. 79 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Spotlite.

Who's Minding the Mint? Color. Jim Hutton, Walter Brennan, Jack Gilford, Milton Berle, Joey Bishop, Victor Buono, Dorothy Provine. Money checker at the U.S. Mint loses \$50,000, prints replacements. 97 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS. \$59.95. RCA/Columbia.

DRAMA

Alexander the Great. Color. 1955. Richard Burton, Fredric March, Claire Bloom. Caught in the net of divided loyalties, thirst for power. By Robert Rossen. 135 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (Dolby Hi-Fi stereo). \$59.95. MGM/UA.

The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman. Color. 1973. Cicely Tyson, Barbara Chaney, Richard Dysart, Katherine Helmond, Michael Murphy, Odetta, Thelma Houston. The 100-plus year life of a black Louisiana woman. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Prism.

Because of the Cats. Color. 1977. Bryan Marshall, Sylvia Kris-

tel, Alexandra Stewart. Police inspector uncovers strange murder, mysterious cult. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Prism.

Beyond Fear. Color. 1978. Michel Bouquet, Michel Constantine, Marilou Tolo. Family held hostage. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Prism.

Beyond Reason. Color. 1982. Telly Savalas, Laura Johnson, Diana Muldaur, Marvin Laird. Psychiatrist combats madness. 88 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Media.

Body Double. Color. Craig Wasson, Melanie Griffith. Actor's curiosity leads to grisly murder. By Brian De Palma. 114 min. (R) Beta (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captions). VHS (Dolby Hi-Fi stereo, cl. cap.). \$79.95./LV. \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

Cornered. B&W. 1946. Dick Powell, Walter Slezak, Micheline Cheirel, Luther Adler, Morris Carnovsky. Hardboiled mystery. By Edward Dmytryk. 102 min. Beta, VHS. \$34.95. RKO.

A Cry for Love. Color. 1980. Susan Blakely, Powers Boothe, Gene Barry, Edie Adams, Lainie Kazan, Charles Siebert, Herb Edelman, Patricia Barry. Couple tries to kick drug and alcohol habits. 98 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. U.S.A.

Death Squad. Color. 1974. Robert Forster, Michelle Phillips, Melvyn Douglas. Renegade police officers create a vigilante organization. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Prism.

Diary of a Teenage Hitchhiker. Color. 1979. Charlene Tilton, Dick Van Patten, Katherine Helmond. Hitchhiker gets into the wrong car. 96 min. Beta, VHS. Lightning.

Falling in Love. Color. 1984. Robert DeNiro, Meryl Streep, Diane Wiest, Harvey Keitel. Newfound love derailed. 106 min. (PG-13) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captions). \$79.95./LV (cl. cap.). \$29.95. Paramount.

The Glitter Dome. Color. James Garner, Margot Kidder, John Lithgow, Colleen Dewhurst. Hollywood cops face crime-ridden city. 90 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$69.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

Grand Hotel. B&W. 1932. Greta Garbo, John Barrymore, Lionel Barrymore, Wallace Beery, Joan Crawford, Lewis Stone, Jean Hersholt, Ferdinand Gottschalk, Rafaela Ottiano. Tragedy and deception in Berlin's high society. 152 min. Beta, VHS (closed captions). \$39.95./LV (cl. cap.). \$34.95. MGM/UA.

Honeyboy. Color. 1982. Erik Estrada, Morgan Fairchild, Hector Elizondo, James McEachin, Yvonne Wilder, Sugar Ray Robinson. Young boxer. 96 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$59.95. U.S.A.

Hughes & Harlow: Angels in Hell. 1978. Lindsay Bloom, Victor Holchak, David McLean. Howard Hughes, Jean Harlow, the making of the WWI epic motion picture *Hell's Angels*. 94 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Monterey.

Johnny Angel. B&W. 1945. George Raft, Claire Trevor, Signe Hasso, Hoagy Carmichael. Gorgeous-dames know more than is good for them. 79 min. Beta, VHS. \$34.95. RKO.

Joy House. B&W. 1965. Jane Fonda, Alain Delon, Lola Albright, Sorrel Booke. Con man sheltered by wealthy American women on the French Riviera. 98 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Monterey.



The Man Who Knew Too Much

Jud. Color. 1971. Joseph Kaufmann, Bonnie Bittner, Robert DeMan, Claudia Jennings. Vietnam vet readjusts to civilian life. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Prism.

Killing Heat. Color. 1984. Karen Black, John Thaw. Lady gives up cosmopolitan life. 104 min. (R) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$59.98. Key.

The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp. Color. 1943. Roger Livesey, Deborah Kerr, Anton Walbrook. A well-meaning British officer. 115 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. VidAmerica.

Lifeboat. B&W. 1944. Tallulah Bankhead, William Bendix, Walter Slezak, Mary Anderson, John Hodiak, Henry Hull, Heather Angel, Hume Cronyn, Canada Lee. Survivors from torpedoed American ship rescue Nazi crew member. By Alfred Hitchcock. 96 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi, closed captions). \$59.98. Key.

Lilith. B&W. Warren Beatty, Jean Seberg, Peter Fonda. Obsessive love between therapist and patient. By Robert Rossen. 114 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS. \$59.95. RCA/Columbia.

Love Story. Color. 1970. Ryan O'Neal, Ali MacGraw, Ray Milland, John Marley, Katherine Balfour. Doomed love. By Arthur Hill-

er. 100 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$29.95 (reissue). Paramount.

Madam X. Color. 1966. Lana Turner, John Forsythe, Ricardo Montalban, Burgess Meredith, Constance Bennett, Keir Dullea. Lonely wife turns to playboy. 100 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Dolby B Hi-Fi). \$59.95. MCA.

Magnificent Obsession. Color. 1954. Jane Wyman, Rock Hudson, Barbara Rush, Agnes Moorehead, Otto Kruger, Gregg Palmer. Playboy dedicates life to helping others. 108 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.95. MCA.

Mahler. Color. Robert Powell, Georgina Hale. Loves, moods, triumphs, music of Gustav Mahler. By Ken Russell. 110 min. (PG) Be-

Suzannah York. Woman seeks to recapture the passions of her youth. 87 min. Beta, VHS. \$74.95. MasterVision.

New York Nights. Color. 1983. Corinne Alphen, George Ayer, Bobbi Burns, Peter Matthey, William Dysart. A game of seduction. 104 min. (R) Beta, VHS. Lightning.

Old Boyfriends. Color. 1979. Talia Shire, John Belushi. Keith Carradine, Richard Jordan, Buck Henry, John Houseman. Woman probes her past. 103 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Embassy.

Old Enough. Color. 1984. Sarah Boyd, Rainbow Harvest, Neill Barry. Young girls in coming-of-age portrait. 91 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Media.

Oliver's Story. Color. 1979. Ryan O'Neal, Candice Bergen, Nicola Pagett, Ray Milland. Couple is shy about making a commitment. 90 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Paramount (drop 8/15/85).

The Other Side of Midnight. Color. 1977. Marie-France Pisier, John Beck, Susan Sarandon, Raf Vallone, Clu Gulagher. Naive teenager experiences romance, betrayal, revenge. 160 min. (R) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.98. Key.

Phar Lap. Color. 1984. Tom Burlinson, Ron Leibman, Martin Vaughan, Judy Morris, Celia De Burgh. A champion race horse. 107 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$79.98. Playhouse.

A Place in the Sun. B&W. 1951. Elizabeth Taylor, Montgomery Clift, Shelley Winters, Keefe Braselle, Raymond Burr, Anne Revere. The moral decay of a rich American family. By George Stevens. 122 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95 (reissue). Paramount.

Places in the Heart. Color. 1984. Sally Field, John Malkovich, Danny Glover, Ed Harris, Lindsay Crouse, Amy Madigan. Struggle to survive Depression hardships. 113 min. (PG) Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captions). \$79.98. CBS/Fox.

Point of Terror. Color. 1971. Peter Carpenter, Dyanne Thorne, Lory Hansen, Leslie Simms. Rock singer determined to do anything to reach the top. 88 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$39.95. VCI.

The Princess & The Call Girl. Color. 1984. Carol Levy, Victor Bevine, Shannah Hall. Call girl gets lookalike friend to take her place. By Radley Metzger. 90 min. (mature) Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$59.95. Monterey.

Romeo and Juliet. Color. 1968. Olivia Hussey, Leonard Whiting, Milo O'Shea, Michael York, John McEnery, Pat Heywood, Natasha Parry, Robert Stephens. 138 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$29.95 (reissue). Paramount.

ta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.95. Thorn EMI.

The Man Who Knew Too Much. Color. 1955. James Stewart, Doris Day, Brenda De Banzie, Bernard Miles, Ralph Truman, Alan Mowbray, Carolyn Jones, Hillary Brooke. American couple caught in international intrigue. By Alfred Hitchcock. 120 min. (PG) LV. \$34.98. MCA.

The Message. Color. 1977. Anthony Quinn, Irene Papas. The life of Mohammad, the 7th century prophet and founder of Islam. 180 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$59.95. U.S.A.

Mephisto. Color. 1981. Klaus Maria Brandauer, Krystyna Janda, Ildiko Bansagi, Karen Boyd, Rolf Hoppe. German actor befriends Nazi general. 132 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$69.95. Thorn EMI.

Miss Julie. Color. Helen Mirren, Donal McCann. Daughter of a nobleman toys with member of working class. 105 min. Beta, VHS. \$74.95. MasterVision.

Monique. Color. Florence Giorgetti, John Ferris. Hidden secret causes bizarre dreams, hallucinations, fits of uncontrollable rage. 96 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. VCL.

A Month in the Country. Color. Ian McShane, Linda Thorson,

Ryan's Daughter. Color. 1970. Sarah Miles, Christopher Jones, Robert Mitchum, Trevor Howard, Leo McKern, Leo Mills. The throes of civil war in Ireland. 194 min. (PG) Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (Dolby Hi-Fi stereo). \$69.95. MGM/UA.

The Saint Strikes Back/Criminal Court. B&W. 1939/1946. "Saint": George Sanders, Wendy Barrie, Barry Fitzgerald. Simon Templar tackles the San Francisco underworld. "Criminal": Tom Conway, Martha O'Driscoll, Robert Armstrong. The murder of a sleazy underworld operator. By Robert Wise. 127 min. Beta, VHS. \$34.95. RKO.

Springhill. Color. Sean Sullivan, Paul Bradley, Mel Tuck. Trapped miners pitted against the elements, each other. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. TWE.

Stromboli. B&W. 1950. Ingrid Bergman, Mario Vitale, Renzo Cesana, Mario Sponza. Displaced woman marries fisherman, discovers she's traded one form of imprisonment for another. By Roberto Rossellini. 81 min. (mature) Beta, VHS. \$39.95. VCI.

Sunday Too Far Away. Color. 1974. Jack Thompson, Reg Lye, Max Cullen, Robert Bruning, Peter Cummins. The Australian sheep industry. 100 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Embassy.

Sweet Beat. B&W. The cruel realities of the recording business; performances include Fred Paris and the 5 Satins ("In the Still of the Night"), the Mellokings ("Tonight, Tonight"). 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. Increase.

Tarchlight. Color. Pamela Sue Martin, Steve Railsback, Ian

McShane, Al Corley, Rita Taggart. The effect of cocaine on marriage. 90 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$79.95./LV. \$34.95. Embassy.

Twice a Woman. Color. 1985. Bibi Andersson, Anthony Perkins, Sandra Dumas. Divorced woman finds fulfillment in provocative young woman. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Prism.

The Vatican Conspiracy. Color. 1982. Terence Stamp, Fabrizio Bentivoglio. A priest's rise to pontiff is filled with intrigue, betrayal, tragedy. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. VCL.

A Whale of a Tale. Color. 1976. William Shatner, Marty Allen, Scott Kolden, Abby Dalton, Nancy O'Conner, Andy Devine. Boy befriends killer whale. 90 min. (G) Beta, VHS. \$39.95. VCI.

FANTASY and SCI-FI

The Barkleys Volume 3. Color. Animated. The canine family in "For Love of Money," "Keeping Up with the Beagles." 46 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. TWE.

The Brather from Another Planet. Color. 1984. Joe Morton, John Sayles. Young black man lands on Earth after escaping slavery on an alien planet. By John Sayles. 109 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captions). \$79.98. Key.

The Fly. Color. 1958. Vincent Price, Al (David) Hedison, Patricia Owens, Herbert Marshall, Kath-

leen Freeman. Scientist has his body mixed up with that of a fly. 78 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.98. Key.

A Gumby Celebration Volume 10. Color. 1956. Animated. Gumby and Pokey in "Egg Troubles," "In the Dough," "In the Morning," "Super-Spray," "Rodeo King," "Northland Follies," "Pickles' Problem," "Piano Rolling Blues," "All Broken Up." 60 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$29.95. Family.

Hawk the Slayer. Color. 1981. Jack Palance, John Terry, Patrick Magee, Patricia Quinn. Hawk fights Voltan, his army of thieves. 90 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. U.S.A.

He-Man and the Masters of the Universe, Volume XI. Color. Animated. "The House of Shokoti, Parts I and II." 45 min. Beta (Hi-Fi, closed captions). VHS (cl. cap.). \$24.95. RCA/Columbia.

I Married a Witch. B&W. 1942. Fredric March, Veronica Lake, Susan Hayward, Robert Benchley. Salem witch, her father return to haunt the descendant of the Puritan who had them condemned. By Rene Clair. 77 min. Beta, VHS. Lightning.

Inspector Gadget. Color. 1983. Animated. 90 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Family.

Le Dernier Combat (The Last Battle). B&W. Pierre Jolivet, Fritz Wepper, Jean Bouise, Christiane Kruger. One man fights for survival after devastating war. 93 min. (R) Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (Dolby Hi-Fi stereo). \$59.95. RCA/Columbia.

The Lucifer Complex. Color. 1978. Robert Vaughn, Merrie Lynn Ross, Keenan Wynn, Aldo Ray. Nazi doctors clone world leaders. 91 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. VCI.

Maan Madness. Color. 1983. Animated. 18th-century astronomer travels to the moon to find the Selenities, who have the fabled fountain of youth. By Jean Image. 82 min. Beta, VHS. Vestron.

Mr. Rossi's Vacation. Color. 1983. Animated. Mr. Rossi and his dog, Gastone, go on holiday. 82 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Family.

The Prisoner #14: Hammer Into Anvil. Color. Victor Madden, Patrick Gargill, Patrick McGoochan. Number 2 sets out to break the Prisoner, but Number 2 has a weakness and the Prisoner is determined to exploit it. 52 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. MPI.

The Prisoner #15: The Girl Who Was Death. Color. Kenneth Griffith, Justine Lord, Patrick McGoochan. The Prisoner is pitted against "Death," a woman who seems to be a killer lurking 'round

every corner. 52 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. MPI.

Return of the Fly. B&W. 1959. Vincent Price, Brett Halsey, John Sutton, David Frankham, Dan Seymour, Danielle De Metz. Son of scientist has his body combined with that of a fly. 78 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.98. Key.

Star Trek—The Television Series: Arena. Color. 1966-67. William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, DeForest Kelley, James Doohan, George Takei, Walter Koenig, Nichelle Nichols. Kirk fights a reptilian alien; broadcast January 19, 1967. 51 min. Beta, VHS. \$14.95. Paramount.

Star Trek—The Television Series: Balance of Terror. Color. 1966-67. William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, DeForest Kelley, James Doohan, George Takei, Walter Koenig, Nichelle Nichols. Kirk pursues invisible vessel suspected of annihilating four Earth outposts; broadcast December 15, 1966. 51 min. Beta, VHS. \$14.95. Paramount.

Star Trek—The Television Series: Caution, Martial. Color. 1966-67. William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, DeForest Kelley, James Doohan, George Takei, Walter Koenig, Nichelle Nichols. Kirk is accused of deliberately murdering a crewman; broadcast February 2, 1967. 51 min. Beta, VHS. \$14.95. Paramount.

Star Trek—The Television Series: Return of the Archons. Color. 1966-67. William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, DeForest Kelley, James Doohan, George Takei, Walter Koenig, Nichelle Nichols. Kirk and Spock attempt to destroy the leader of a zombie-like culture on the planet Beta 3; broadcast February 9, 1967. 51 min. Beta, VHS. \$14.95. Paramount.

Star Trek—The Television Series: Shore Leave. Color. 1966-67. William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, DeForest Kelley, James Doohan, George Takei, Walter Koenig, Nichelle Nichols. Kirk orders the Enterprise to an Earthlike planet so his crew can enjoy rest and recreation; broadcast December 29, 1966. 51 min. Beta, VHS. \$14.95. Paramount.

Star Trek—The Television Series: The Conscience of the King. Color. 1966-67. William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, DeForest Kelley, James Doohan, George Takei, Walter Koenig, Nichelle Nichols. A traveling acting troupe spells danger; broadcast December 8, 1966. 51 min. Beta, VHS. \$14.95. Paramount.

Star Trek—The Television Series: The Galilea Seven. Color. 1966-67. William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, DeForest Kelley, James Doohan, George Takei, Walter Koenig, Nichelle Nichols.



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Spock clashes with giant Neanderthal-like creatures; broadcast January 5, 1967. 51 min. Beta, VHS. \$14.95. Paramount.

Star Trek—The Television Series: The Menagerie Parts I and II. Color. 1966-67. William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, DeForest Kelley, James Doohan, George Takei, Walter Koenig, Nichelle Nichols. "Part I": Spock takes control of the Enterprise and kidnaps crippled Captain Pike. "Part II": Spock conducts his defense against mutiny; broadcast November 17 & 24, 1966. 102 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Paramount.

Star Trek—The Television Series: The Squire of Gothos. Color. 1966-67. William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, DeForest Kelley, James Doohan, George Takei, Walter Koenig, Nichelle Nichols. Kirk plays the game of death with a maniacal alien; broadcast January 12, 1967. 51 min. Beta, VHS. \$14.95. Paramount.

Star Trek—The Television Series: Tomorrow Is Yesterday. Color. 1966-67. William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, DeForest Kelley, James Doohan, George Takei, Walter Koenig, Nichelle Nichols. Back into the past and confronted by an Air Force jet; broadcast January 26, 1967. 51 min. Beta, VHS. \$14.95. Paramount.

Thunderbirds in Outer Space. Color. 1981. Animated. Thunderbirds save three solarnauts, aid a radio satellite. 92 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Family.

The Undersea Adventures of Captain Nemo—Volume 4. Color. 1975. Animated. Captain Nemo and the Nautilus. 60 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$29.95. Family.

Voltron—Defender of the Universe: The Castle of Lions. Color. 1985. Animated. Space explorers Keith, Lance, Spin, Hunk, Pidge protect the galaxy from King Zarkon. 83 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$49.95. Sony.

Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea. Color. 1961. Walter Pidgeon, Joan Fontaine, Barbara Eden, Peter Lorre, Robert Sterling, Michael Ansara, Frankie Avalon. Futuristic atomic submarine discovers the polar ice cap ablaze. 106 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.98. Playhouse.

Warrior of the Lost World. Color. Robert Ginty, Persis Khambatta, Donald Pleasence. Radiation results in new dark age of tyranny and oppression. 90 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$69.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

The Water Babies. Color. 1979. Animated, live action. Tommy Pender, James Mason. Young orphan, his dog find a magical underwater world. 120 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Embassy.

The Wind in the Willows. Color. Animated. In the woods. Voices of Ian Carmichael, Beryl Reid. 78 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$29.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

The World of Hans Christian Andersen. Color. Animated. The beginnings of the storyteller. 73 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS. \$59.95. RCA/Columbia.

HORROR

Creature from Black Lake. Color. 1976. Jack Elam, Dub Taylor, Dennis Fimple. Bizarre creature, Louisiana backwoods. 95 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. Lightning.

The Curse of King Tut's Tomb. Color. Robin Ellis, Harry Andrews, Eva Marie Saint, Raymond Burr. Tutankhamen's tomb, the tragedies of the legendary curse. 98 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS. \$59.95. RCA/Columbia.

Devil Dog—The Hound of Hell. Color. 1978. Richard Crenna, Yvette Mimieux, Kim Richards, Ike Eisenmann. Family acquires possessed puppy. 95 min. Beta, VHS. Lightning.

Die Sister, Die! Color. Jack Ging, Edith Atwater, Kent Smith. Gothic mansion, insane recluse, scheming brother, a secret in the basement. 88 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Gorgon.

The Ghoul. Color. John Hurt, Peter Cushing. Unspeakable evil terrorizes party guests. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. VCI.

Kiss Daddy Goodbye. Color. 1981. Fabian Forte, Marilyn Burns, Jon Cedar. Telekinetic children punish murderous outlaw bikers. 92 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (stereo). \$59.95. Monterey.

Legacy of Horror. Color. Elaine Boies, Chris Broderick, Marilee Troncone. Feuding sisters stay in the family mansion on a private island. 83 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Gorgon.

The Milpitas Monster. Color. 1980. Doug Hagdahl, Priscilla D. House. Gigantic creature spawned in town's polluted, overflowing dump. 80 min. (PG) Beta, \$49.95. VCI.

Mutant. Color. 1983. Bo Hopkins, Jennifer Warren, Wings Hauser, Lee Montgomery, Jody Medford. Illegal dumping of toxic wastes takes its toll. By John Cardos. 100 min. (R) Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). Vestron.

A Nightmare on Elm Street. Color. 1984. John Saxon, Ronee Blakeley, Heather Langenkamp. High school friends systematically slaughtered in their sleep. 92 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. Media.

Slumber Party Massacre. Col-

or. 1982. Michele Michaels, Robin Stille, Michael Vellea. Horrifying blood bath at high school girls' slumber party. 77 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Embassy.

Tomb of the Undead. Color. Undead prison camp convicts search for revenge. 60 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Increase.



INFORMATION

American History—The Civil War. Color. Two views of the Civil War: the Northern war against slavery, Southern resistance against North's bid for money and power. 30 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Increase.

The Decline of Western Civilization. Color. Los Angeles' punk bands perform on stage, discuss their lives, music, philosophy; interviews with fans, music critics, club owners. Includes X, Circle Jerks, Black Flag, Fear, Catholic Discipline, Germs, Alice Bag Band. 100 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Music.

Faces of Death. Color. Macabre investigation into the realm of death and dying. 105 min. (mature) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Gorgon.

Faces of Death, Part II. Color. Man and nature run amuck. 84 min. (mature) Beta, VHS. \$69.95. Gorgon.

The Golden Age of the Automobile. Color. Old autos still fire the imagination of car lovers. 55 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Increase.

Kooky Classics. Color. 1984. Shari Lewis, Lamb Chop, Hush Puppy. Music, from "The Marriage of Figaro," to a dance by Brahms, tunes made famous by Fred Astaire, contemporary solid gold. 54 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. MGM/UA.

Manson. The lives, actions, beliefs of convicted murderer Charles Manson, his Family members: Steve Grogan, Bruce Davis, Lynn "Squeaky" Fromme, Sandra

Good, Nancy Pittman, Catherine Share, Mary Brunner. Also, prosecution witness Paul Watkins, who fled the Family before the murders, and chief prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi, author of *Helter Skelter*. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Video-cassette.

The Master Cooking Course. Color. 1984. Craig Claiborne, Pierre Franey. World class chefs' step-by-step guide to gourmet cooking; includes breaded veal scallopini vienna style, creme of carrot soup, tomato roses, asparagus vinaigrette, chocolate mousse. 57 min. Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Dolby B Hi-Fi). \$29.95. MCA.

Slight of Hand—The Magic of Cards. Color. Derek Dingle performs card tricks, demonstrates how each is done. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Increase.

Space Archive, Volume 3: Mars and Beyond—Sight Seeing in the Outer Planets. Color. 1985. NASA photo and video transmission; motion, still, audio sequences from the Viking, Voyager missions to Mars, Jupiter, Saturn. Side 1: 16 topically-arranged sections including "Life on Mars?," "Martian Geology," "Rings," "Moons," "Weather"; 3D video of the Viking Lander, the Martian landscape, Mars from orbit. Side 2: NASA-produced "Voyager" film. Includes a 13-page Travel Guide, Image Directory, 2 pair of 3D viewing glasses. Random Access. LV (CAV, 2 sides). \$39.95. Vision.

MISC.

Playboy Video Magazine—Volume 7. Color. "Joan Collins—Uncensored!," "Karen Velez, Miss December 1984," "Pompeo Posar—Portrait of a Playboy Photographer," "Dutch Playmates," "French Postcards," "Comedy Commercials," "Tricks of the Trade." 76 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo, closed captions). \$59.98. CBS/Fox.

MUSIC

Australia Now. Color. Australia's rock bands and its people, featuring the Monitors, Little River Band, Mondo Rock, Inxs, Australian Crawl, Mental as Anything, Split Enz, Eurogliders, Men at Work, Angel City, Icehouse, Songs of Bamyli, No Fixed Address, Cold Chisel, Midnight Oil, The Little Heroes, Moving Pictures, Goanna. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95. Music.

Children's Songs and Stories with the Muppets. Color. 1985. Julie Andrews, Charles Aznavour, Judy Collins, John Denver, Brooke Shields, Twiggy. Original productions, material from the Muppet TV series. 56 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.98. Playhouse.

Don Quixote. Color. Mikhail Baryshnikov, Cynthia Harvey in the American Ballet Theatre performance conducted by Paul Connell at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York City. 135 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$39.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

High Society. Color. 1956. Grace Kelly, Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby, Celeste Holm, Louis Armstrong. Quiet society wedding interrupted by ex-husband. 112 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. MGM/UA.

The Kermit and Piggy Story. Color. 1985. Cheryl Ladd, Tony Randall, Loretta Swit, Raquel Welch. A chorus pig rises to superstardom, finds the handsome frog of her dreams. 57 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.98. Playhouse.

Les Cantes d'Haffmann. Color. Placido Domingo, Agnes Baltsa, Luciana Serra, Ileana Cortubas in the opera by Jacques Offenbach performed by the Royal Opera at Covent Garden. 135 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$39.95. Thorn EMI/HBO.

Minar Detail. Color. 1984. "Canvas of Life," "Hold On," "Why Take It Again." 11 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi stereo). \$16.95. Sony.

The Muppet Revue. Color. 1985. Harry Belafonte, Rita Moreno, Linda Ronstadt, Paul Williams, Kermit and Fozzie relive favorite adventures from the Muppet TV series. 56 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.98. Playhouse.

Rock Music with the Muppets. Color. 1985. Alice Cooper, Debbie Harry, Helen Reddy, Linda Ronstadt, Leo Sayer, Paul Simon, Loretta Swit, Ben Vereen. 54 min. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.98. Playhouse.

Strike Up the Band. B&W. 1940. Judy Garland, Mickey Rooney. Talented high school kids make it big in show business. By Busby Berkeley. 120 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95./LV. \$34.95. MGM/UA.

Thase Lips, Thase Eyes. Color. 1980. Frank Langella, Thomas Hulse, Glynnis O'Connor, Jerry Stiller, Kevin McCarthy. The pleasures, disappointments of summer stock life in the 1950s. 106 min. (R) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. MGM/UA.

The Unsinkable Molly Brown. Color. 1964. Debbie Reynolds, Harve Presnell. Molly searches for a rich husband and a better life. 128 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (Dolby Hi-Fi stereo). \$59.95. MGM/UA.



The Unsinkable Molly Brown

SPORTS

The Best of the WWF—Volume 1.

Color. 1985. Wrestling matches include Big John Studd, Adonis, and Murdoch vs. Andre the Giant and Hulk Hogan; Gorilla vs. the Greatest Muhammad Ali; Jimmy "Superfly" Snuka; Wendy Richter vs. Fabulous Moolah; more. 90 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Coliseum.

Blaaps, Bleeps & Bodysiams!

Color. 1985. Wrestling stars in outtakes, mistakes, crackups; includes Andre the Giant, Captain Lou Albano, Ivan Putski, the Wild Samoans, Classy Freddie Blassie, pie fight at the wedding of Paul "the Butcher" Vachon. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Coliseum.

Hulkamania. Color. 1985. Hulk Hogan wrestles the Iron Sheik, David "Dr. D" Schultz, Big John Studd; "interviews" about being a champion, the discipline of the ring, competitive spirit, workout and nutrition. 60 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Coliseum.

JOHN WAYNE COLLECTOR

The Alama. Color. 1960. John Wayne, Richard Widmark, Lawrence Harvey, Richard Boone, Frankie Avalon, Carlos Arruza, Pat Wayne, Linda Cristal. Remember? 161 min. Beta, VHS. \$79.95./CED. \$39.98. CBS/Fox.

Allegheny Uprising. B&W. John Wayne, Claire Trevor, George Sanders. Colonists revolt against British army officer. 81 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95 (reissue). Nostalgia.

America at the Movies. Color, B&W. 1976. Excerpts from over

80 motion pictures tell the 50-year history of the industry; stars include John Wayne, Orson Welles, Peter Sellers, James Dean, Gene Hackman, Burt Lancaster, Julie Harris, Deborah Kerr, Al Pacino, Robert DeNiro. 116 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. RCA/Columbia.

Angel and the Badman. B&W. 1947. John Wayne, Gail Russell, Harry Carey, Irene Rich, Bruce Cabot. Lady tames gunfighter. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Kartes./100 min. \$39.95. NTA.

Back to Bataan. B&W. 1945. John Wayne, Anthony Quinn, Beulah Bondi, Lawrence Tierney, Fely Franquelli, Richard Loo, Philip Ahn. Resistance battles the Japanese in the Philippines. 95 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.98. Blackhawk./\$29.95 (reissue). Nostalgia.

Big Jake. Color. 1971. John Wayne, Richard Boone, Maureen O'Hara, Patrick Wayne, Chris Mitchum, Bobby Vinton, Bruce Cabot. Man goes after gang that's kidnapped his grandson. 110 min. CED. \$19.95. CBS/Fox.

Brannigan. Color. 1975. John Wayne, Richard Attenborough, Judy Geeson, John Stride, John Vernon, Mel Ferrer, Daniel Pilon, James Booth, Ralph Meeker. 111 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95./CED. \$29.98. CBS/Fox.

Cahill: United States Marshal. Color. 1973. John Wayne, Gary Grimes, Neville Brand, George Kennedy. Lawman's wayward sons mixed up with vicious outlaw gang. 103 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Warner.

Chisum. Color. 1970. John Wayne, Forrest Tucker, Christopher George, Glenn Corbett, Ben Johnson, Bruce Cabot, Patric Knowles, Lynda Day, Richard Jaeckel. 111 min. (G) Beta, VHS. \$60. Warner.

Circus World. Color. 1964. John Wayne, Rita Hayworth, Claudia Cardinale, Lloyd Nolan, Richard Conte, John Smith. Traveling Wild West circus tours Europe. 131 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95 (reissue). VCI.

The Camancheras. Color. 1961. John Wayne, Lee Marvin, Stuart

Whitman, Nehemiah Persoff, Ina Balin, Bruce Cabot. Texas Ranger chases gang supplying guns and liquor to the Comanches. 108 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.98./107 min. CED. \$29.98. CBS/Fox.

The Conqueror. Color. 1953. John Wayne, Susan Hayward, William Conrad. 111 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. MCA.

The Cowboys. Color. 1972. John Wayne, Roscoe Lee Brown, Bruce Dern, Colleen Dewhurst. Rancher gambles on 11 schoolboys. 128 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Warner.

Dakota. B&W. 1945. John Wayne, Vera Ralston, Walter Brennan, Ward Bond, Ona Munson, Hugo Haas. Expanding railroad wants territory. 82 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. NTA.

Dark Cammand. B&W. 1940. John Wayne, Claire Trevor, Walter Pidgeon, Roy Rogers, George "Gabby" Hayes, Marjorie Main. Raiders terrorize small town. 94 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. NTA.

Dawn Rider. B&W. 1935. John Wayne, Marion Burns. Man vows to bring father's killers to justice. 53 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Spotlite.

Donavan's Reef. Color. 1963. John Wayne, Lee Marvin. 109 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95./LV \$29.95. Paramount.

El Darada. Color. 1967. John Wayne, Robert Mitchum, James Caan. 126 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Paramount./127 min. CED. \$39.98. RCA.

The Fighting Kentuckian. B&W. 1949. John Wayne, Vera Ralston, Philip Dorn, Oliver Hardy, Marie Windsor. Fighting frontier land grabbers. 100 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. NTA.

The Fighting Seabees. B&W. 1947. John Wayne, Susan Hayward, Dennis O'Keefe, William Frawley, Paul Fix, Duncan Renaldo. 100 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. NTA.

Flame of the Barbary Coast. B&W. 1945. John Wayne, Ann Dvorak, Joseph Schildkraut, William Frawley, Virginia Grey. Rancher and city slicker compete for singer. 91 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. NTA.

Flying Leathernecks. Color. 1951. John Wayne, Robert Ryan, Don Taylor, Janis Page. Tough officer commands Marine flyers. 102 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95 (reissue). Nostalgia.

Flying Tigers. B&W. 1942. John Wayne, John Carroll, Anna Lee, Paul Kelly, Mae Clarke, Gordon Jones. Pilots stationed in WWII China. 102 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. NTA.

Fart Apache. B&W. 1948. John Wayne, Henry Fonda, Shirley Temple, Pedro Armendariz, John

Agar, Anna Lee, Victor McLaglen. Indian attacks, conflicts between frontier men. By John Ford. 125 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95 (reissue). Nostalgia./120 min. \$34.95 (reissue). VidAmerica.

Frontier Horizon. B&W. 1939. John Wayne, Phyllis Isley. The Three Mesquiteers aid settlers. 55 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Spotlite.

Going Hollywood the Thirties. Color. 1983. Robert Preston, host. Reality and make-believe in the Hollywood dream factories, with Clark Gable, Joan Crawford, Henry Fonda, James Cagney, Carole Lombard, John Wayne, Mae West, Bette Davis, the Marx Brothers. 75 min. Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). VHS (stereo). \$39.95. Monterey.

The Greatest Story Ever Told. Color. 1965. Max von Sydow, Charlton Heston, Sidney Poitier, Claude Rains, Jose Ferrer, Telly Savalas, Angela Lansbury, Dorothy McGuire, Carroll Baker, Shelley Winters, John Wayne, Ed Wynn, Van Heflin, Donald Pleasence, Sal Mineo, Ina Balin, Pat Boone, Victor Buono, Richard Conte, Martin Landau, Janet Margolin, David McCallum, Roddy McDowall, Nehemiah Persoff, Joseph Schildkraut, Paul Stewart, Ed Wynn. Christ's journey from Galilee to his death. 196 min. Beta, VHS (closed captions). \$69.98. CBS/Fox.

The Green Berets. Color. 1968. John Wayne, Aldo Ray, Raymond St. Jacques. The Special Forces in Vietnam. 135 min. (G) Beta, VHS. \$64.95. Warner./CED. \$34.98. RCA.

Hatari! Color. 1962. John Wayne, Elsa Martinelli, Red Buttons, Hardy Kruger, Gerard Blain, Bruce Cabot. 159 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95./LV. \$35.95. Paramount.

Hellfighters. Color. 1968. John Wayne, Katherine Ross, Jim Hutton. They put out mammoth oil well blazes. 121 min. (G) Beta (Hi-Fi). VHS (Dolby B Hi-Fi). \$59.95. MCA.

The Horse Soldiers. Color. 1959. John Wayne, William Holden, Constance Towers, Althea Gibson, Hoot Gibson, Anna Lee, Russell Simpson. Union volunteers drive through Dixie to destroy strategic rail route. Beta, VHS (Hi-Fi). \$59.98./CED (English, Spanish tracks). \$19.98. CBS/Fox./119 min. CED. \$24.98. RCA.

In Old California. B&W. 1942. John Wayne, Binnie Barnes, Albert Dekker, Helen Parrish, Patsy Kelly, Edgar Kennedy, Dick Purcell, Harry Shannon. Newcomer confronted by town boss. 88 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. NTA.

John Wayne Double Feature I. B&W. 1934/1934. *Blue Steel* and *West of the Divide*. 120 min. Beta, VHS. Electric.

John Wayne Double Feature II. B&W. 1934/1933. *Star Packer* and *Sagebrush Trail*. 120 min. Beta, VHS. Electric.

John Wayne Matinee Double Feature #1. B&W. 1934/1936. Rooting out post-Civil War carpetbaggers; going undercover to save small town from a ruthless gang. 111 min. Beta, VHS. NTA.

John Wayne Matinee Double Feature #2. B&W. 1935/1939. Innocent man believes he accidentally murdered his best friend; Landis can't pay the rent on the ranch and circus. 117 min. Beta, VHS. NTA.

Lady for a Night. B&W. 1941. John Wayne, Joan Blondell, Ray Middleton, Philip Merivale, Blanche Yurka, Edith Barrett. Woman gambling-boat owner suspected of murder. 87 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. NTA.

Lady from Louisiana. B&W. 1941. John Wayne, Osa Massen, Ray Middleton, Henry Stephenson, Helen Westley, Jack Pennick. Gambling comes between man and lady. 82 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. NTA.

Lady Takes a Chance. B&W. 1943. Jean Arthur, John Wayne, Charles Winninger, Phil Silvers, Mary Field, Don Costello, Hans Conreid. City girl falls for rodeo star. 86 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. VidAmerica.



Lawless Range. B&W. 1935. John Wayne, Sheila Mannors. Man is sent to discover the motives behind a series of mysterious raids. 53 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Spotlite.

The Longest Day. B&W. 1962. John Wayne, Robert Mitchum, Henry Fonda, Andrew Marton, Bernhard Wicki, Rod Steiger, Robert Ryan, Peter Lawford, Red Buttons, Mel Ferrer, Richard Burton, Irina Demick. 179 min. (G) Beta, VHS. \$79.95. CBS/Fox./CED. \$34.98. RCA.

The Lucky Texan. B&W. 1934. Cowboy action. 55 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Crown.

The Man from Utah. B&W. 1934. John Wayne, George "Gabby" Hayes. Accused of being a bandit. 53 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Spotlite.

The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance. B&W. 1962. James Stewart, John Wayne, Vera Miles, Lee Marvin, Edmond O'Brien, Andy Devine, Woody Strode. 122 min. Beta, VHS. \$62.95./LV. \$29.95. Paramount./119 min. CED. \$21.98. RCA.

McQ. Color. 1974. John Wayne, Eddie Albert, Diana Muldaur, Clu Gulager. Police lieutenant resigns to track down dope dealers. 116 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Warner.

'Neath Arizona Skies. B&W. 1934. John Wayne, Jay Wilsey. Indian heiress abducted by outlaws. 54 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Spotlite.

The Night Riders/Home on the Range. B&W, Color. 1939/1946. "Night": battling injustice. "Home": protecting a wild animal refuge. 120 min. Beta, VHS. Nostalgia.

North to Alaska. Color. 1960. John Wayne, Stewart Granger, Ernie Kovacs, Fabian, Capucine, Mickey Shaughnessy. Action in

Alaska. 122 min. CED (Spanish, English dual tracks). \$29.98. CBS/Fox.

Olaf Weighorst: Painter of the American West. Color. 1978. Olaf Weighorst, John Wayne, Howard Hawks. The life, selected works of the Western painter. 54 min. Beta, VHS. Nostalgia.

Paradise Canyon. B&W. 1935. John Wayne, Yakima Canutt. Government agent sent to round up counterfeiters. 55 min. Beta,

VHS. \$19.95. Spotlite.

The Quiet Man. Color. 1952. John Wayne, Maureen O'Hara, Barry Fitzgerald, Ward Bond, Victor McLaglen, Mildred Natwick, Francis Ford, Arthur Shields. 129 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. NTA./CED. \$34.98. RCA.

Randy Rides Alone. B&W. 1934. John Wayne, George "Gabby" Hayes. Wrongly accused man escapes to trap real killers. 53 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Spotlite.

Red River. B&W. 1948. John Wayne, Joanne Dru, Montgomery Cliff, Walter Brennan, Coleen Gray, John Ireland, Harry Carey Jr., Noah Beery Jr. Son rebels against cattle baron father. By Howard Hawks. 125 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Key./LV. \$34.98. CBS/Fox./CED. \$34.95. RCA.

Riders of Destiny. B&W. 1933. John Wayne, Cecilia Parker. Undercover agent helps ranchers with water rights. 52 min. Beta, VHS. \$19.95. Spotlite.

Rio Bravo. Color. 1958. John Wayne, Dean Martin, Angie Dickinson, Ricky Nelson, Walter Brennan. Sheriff recaptures escaped prisoner. 140 min. Beta, VHS. \$60. Warner./141 min. CED. \$39.98. RCA.

Rio Grande. B&W. 1950. John Wayne, Maureen O'Hara, Ben Johnson, Harry Carey Jr., Victor McLaglen, Claude Jarman Jr. Cavalry vs. the Apaches. 105 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. NTA.

Rio Lobo. Color. 1970. John Wayne, Jorge Rivero, Jennifer O'Neill, Jack Elam. 105 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95./CED. \$24.95. MGM/UA.

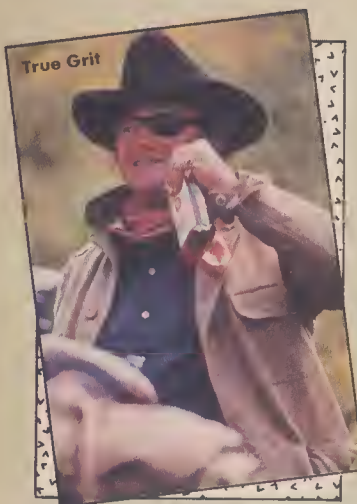
Rooster Cogburn (...and the Lady). Color. 1975. John Wayne, Katharine Hepburn, Anthony Zerbe, Strother Martin, Richard Jordan, John McIntire. 107 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$39.95. MCA.

Sands of Iwo Jima. B&W. 1949. John Wayne, John Agar, Adele Mara, Forrest Tucker, James Brown, Arthur Franz, Richard Jaeckel. 109 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. NTA.

The Searchers. Color. 1956. John Wayne, Jeffrey Hunter, Vera Miles, Ward Bond, Natalie Wood, John Qualen, Harry Carey Jr., Olive Carey, Antonio Moreno, Dorothy Jordan. 119 min. Beta, VHS. \$60./LV. \$34.98. Warner./CED. \$29.98 (reissue). RCA.

Seven Sinners. B&W. 1940. Marlene Dietrich, John Wayne, Albert Dekker, Broderick Crawford, Anna Lee, Mischa Auer, Billy Gilbert. Adventure and romance in the South Seas. Beta, VHS. Lyric.

Shadow of the Eagle. B&W. 1932. John Wayne, Dorothy Guliver, Pat O'Malley, Yakima Canutt, Little Billy. Warnings sent by mysterious eagle tracked down



by stunt-flying, motorcycle-riding John Wayne. 226 min. (12 episodes) Beta, VHS. \$119.95. Yesteryear.

She Wore a Yellow Ribbon. Color. 1949. John Wayne, Joanne Dru, Ben Johnson, John Agar, Harry Carey Jr., Victor McLaglen, Mildred Natwick, George O'Brien. Cavalry officer puts off retirement to fight Indians. By John Ford. 103 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95 (reissue). Nostalgia.

The Shootist. Color. 1976. John Wayne, Lauren Bacall, James Stewart, Ron Howard, Richard Boone, Bill McKinney, John Carradine, Scatman Crothers, Harry Morgan, Hugh O'Brien, Sheree North. 100 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$62.95./LV. \$29.95. Paramount./CED. \$21.98. RCA.

The Sons of Katie Elder. Color. 1965. John Wayne, Dean Martin, Earl Holliman, Michael Anderson Jr. 122 min. Beta, VHS. \$49.95. Paramount./120 min. CED. \$29.98. RCA.

The Spoilers. B&W. 1942. John Wayne, Randolph Scott, Marlene Dietrich, Margaret Lindsay. Yukon adventurers argue over land and love. 84 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. MCA.

Stagecoach. B&W. 1939. John Wayne, Claire Trevor, Thomas Mitchell, Andy Devine, John Carradine, George Bancroft, Tim Holt, Louise Platt, Donald Meek, Berton Churchill. 96 min. Beta, VHS. Vestron./CED. \$19.98. RCA.

Tall in the Saddle. B&W. 1944. John Wayne, Ella Raines, "Gabby" Hayes, Ward Bond. Woman-hating cowboy goes to work for aging spinster, her young niece. 79 min. Beta, VHS. \$29.95 (reissue). Nostalgia.

That's Action. Color. B&W. Anthology of motion picture performances by John Wayne, Victor McLaglen, Maureen O'Hara, Cary Grant, Rita Hayworth, Douglas Fairbanks Jr., Joan Crawford, Marlene Dietrich, Charles Laughton, others. Beta, VHS. \$54.95. Station.

Three Faces West. B&W. 1940. John Wayne, Charles Coburn, Sigrid Gurie, Spencer Charters. Unusual traveling companions. 79 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. NTA.

The Three Musketeers. B&W. 1933. John Wayne, Jack Mulhall, Francis X. Bushman Jr., Noah Berry Jr., Creighton Chaney. Desert fight against "El Shaitan." 216 min. (12 episodes) Beta, VHS. \$119.95. Yesteryear.

The Train Robbers. Color. 1973. John Wayne, Ann-Margret, Rod Taylor, Ricardo Montalban, Ben Johnson, Christopher George, Bobby Vinton. Feisty widow, three cowboy buddies recover stolen gold. 92 min. (PG) Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Warner.

True Grit. Color. 1969. John Wayne, Glen Campbell, Kim Darby, Roberty Duvall, Jeremy Slate, Dennis Hopper. 128 min. (G) Beta, VHS. \$66.95./LV. \$35.95. Paramount./CED. \$31.98. RCA.

Tycoon. Color. 1947. John Wayne, Laraine Day, Cedric Hardwicke, Judith Anderson, James Gleason, Anthony Quinn, Grant Withers. Railroad engineer falls in love with land baron's daughter. 120 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. Blackhawk./\$28.95. King./128 min. \$29.95 (reissue). Nostalgia.

Wake of the Red Witch. B&W. 1948. John Wayne, Gail Russell, Gig Young, Adele Mara, Luther Adler, Paul Fix, Jeff Corey. 106 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. NTA.

War of the Wildcats. B&W. 1943. John Wayne, Martha Scott, Albert Dekker, George "Gabby" Hayes, Dale Evans. 102 min. Beta, VHS. \$59.95. NTA.

The War Wagon. Color. 1967. John Wayne, Kirk Douglas, Howard Keel, Robert Walker Jr., Keenan Wynn. 101 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. MCA.

Wheel of Fortune (originally titled *A Man Betrayed*). B&W. 1941. John Wayne, Frances Dee, Edward Ellis, Wallace Ford, Ward Bond, Harold Huber, Alexander Granach. Lawyer tries to prove girlfriend's father is crooked politician. 83 min. Beta, VHS. \$39.95. NTA.

SOURCES

Blackhawk Films, One Old Eagle Brewery, Box 3990, Davenport, Iowa 52808 (319-323-9736).

Buena Vista Home Video, 500 S. Buena Vista St., Burbank, Calif. 91521 (818-840-1859).

CBS/Fox Video, 1211 Sixth Ave., 2nd floor, New York, N.Y. 10036 (212-819-3200).

Coliseum Video, 430 W. 54th St., New York, N.Y. 10019 (212-582-6405).

Crown Video, 1 Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016 (212-532-9822).

Electric Video, 1116 Edgewater Ave., Ridgefield, N.J. 07657 (201-943-7860).

Embassy Home Entertainment, 1901 Ave. of the Stars, Los Angeles, Calif. 90067 (213-553-3600).

Family Home Entertainment, 7920 Alabama Ave., Canoga Park, Calif. 91304 (800-423-7455).

Gorgon Video, c/o Maljack Productions, 15825 Rob Roy Dr., Oak Forest, Ill. 60452 (312-687-7881).

I.M.A., 5514 Satsuma Ave., N. Hollywood, Calif. 91601 (telephone n.a.).

Increase Video, 8265 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90046 (213-654-8808).

Kartes Video Communications—VC 2000, 10 E. 106th St., Indianapolis, Ind. 46280 (800-331-1387).

Key Video, 1298 Prospect Ave., La Jolla, Calif. 92037 (619-459-0500).

King of Video, 3529 S. Valley View Blvd., Las Vegas, Nev. 89102 (800-634-6143; in Calif. 818-986-0516).

Lightning Video, Box 4384, Stamford, Conn. 06907 (203-329-1463).

Lyric Distribution, 162B Cabot St., West Babylon, N.Y. 11704

(telephone n.a.).

MasterVision, 969 Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10028 (212-879-0448).

MCA Home Video, 70 Universal City Plaza, Universal City, Calif. 91608 (818-508-4315).

Media Home Entertainment, 5730 Buckingham Pkwy., Culver City, Calif. 90230 (213-216-7900, 800-421-4509).

MGM/UA Home Video, 1350 Sixth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10019 (212-408-0600).

Monterey Home Video, 7920 Alabama Ave., Canoga Park, Calif. 91304 (800-423-7455).

MPI Home Video, Maljack Productions, 15825 Rob Roy Dr., Oak Forrest, Ill. 60452 (312-687-7881).

Music Media, 5730 Buckingham Pkwy., Culver City, Calif. 90230 (213-216-7900, 800-421-4509).

Nostalgia Merchant, 5730 Buckingham Pkwy., Culver City, Calif. 90230 (213-216-7900, 800-421-4509).

NTA Home Entertainment, 12636 Beatrice St., Box 66930, Los Angeles, Calif. 90066 (213-306-4040).

Paramount Home Video, 5451 Marathon St., Hollywood, Calif. 90038 (213-468-5000).

Playhouse Video, 1211 Sixth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10036 (212-819-3228).

Prism Entertainment Corp., 1875 Century Park E. #1010, Los Angeles, Calif. 90067 (213-277-3270).

RCA VideoDiscs, 1133 Sixth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10036 (212-930-4700).

RCA/Columbia Pictures Home Video, 2901 W. Alameda Ave., Burbank, Calif. 91505 (818-954-4950).

RKO Home Video, 15840 Ventura Blvd. #303, Encino, Calif. 91436 (818-906-1722).

Sony Video Software, 9 W. 57th St., New York, N.Y. 10019 (800-847-4164, 800-522-5229 in N.Y.).

Spotlite Video, 12636 Beatrice St., Box 66930, Los Angeles, Calif. 90066-0930 (213-306-4040).

Video Station, 1740 Stanford, Santa Monica, Calif. 90404 (213-453-5535).

Thorn EMI/HBO Video, 1370 Sixth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10019 (212-977-8990).

Trans World Entertainment, 6430 Sunset Blvd. #501, Hollywood, Calif. 90028 (213-461-0467, 800-521-0107).

U.S.A. Home Video, 7920 Alabama Ave., Canoga Park, Calif. 91304 (800-423-7455).

VCI/Video Communications Home Video, 6555 E. Skelly Dr., Tulsa, Okla. 74145 (918-622-6460).

VCL Communications, 5730 Buckingham Pkwy., Culver City, Calif. 90230 (213-216-7900, 800-421-4509).

Vestron Video, 1011 High Ridge Rd., Box 4000, Stamford, Conn. 06907 (203-968-0000).


VidAmerica, 235 E. 55th St., New York, N.Y. 10022 (213-355-1600).

Videocassette Marketing Corporation, 137 Eucalyptus St., El Segundo, Calif. 90245 (213-322-1140).

Video Vision Associates, 7 Waverly Place, Madison, N.J. 07940 (201-377-0302).

Warner Home Video, 4000 Warner Blvd., Burbank, Calif. 91522 (818-954-6000).

Video Yesteryear, Box C, Sandy Hook, Conn. 06482 (800-243-0987).



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Zworykin V. Farnsworth

Part I

By Frank Lovece

Thomas Edison never existed. Neither did the Wright Brothers or Alexander Graham Bell. They gave us sweat and intellect, of course, but what we want to believe in are the legends. Never mind that Edison had regiments of assistants, or that the Wright Brothers relied on years of other people's research as much as their own. Bell? He got his ideas from the telegraph, not heaven.

Tucked somewhere between George Washington's cherry tree and the Ringling Brothers' unicorn lies the Legend of Television. It goes like this: While there was no single inventor, a Russian-American scientist named Vladimir Zworykin is "the father of television." He invented a TV-camera tube called the iconoscope in 1923. Or maybe 1925. With his picture tube, the kinescope, he completed the first practical electronic TV system in 1924. Or maybe 1925. Or 1928. (Legends are so hard to pin down.) Zworykin and staff, under the aegis of RCA czar David Sarnoff, almost single-handedly brought television out of the two-cans-and-a-string stage. RCA rolled on to give America its first TV sets and programs starting at the 1939 World's Fair.

This is the Legend of Television. Like most, it's essentially untrue.

Zworykin, who died in 1982, did possess a brilliant and unorthodox mind which conjured many of the most critical elements of the modern TV set. His and RCA's contributions not just to TV but to every facet of electro-optics are incalculable. Yet: "the father of television"? Zworykin himself kept saying he couldn't pass the blood test. But a larger voice—the voice of RCA tout-

The strange story of TV's troubled origins

ing the Legend—kept drowning him out.

The Legend has begun to crumble only now, through reappraisal of neglected documents, fresh talks with colleagues and family members, and two important discoveries: the manuscript of Zworykin's unpublished autobiography, and a series of long-hidden videotaped interviews conducted by video pioneer Chuck Azar toward the end of Zworykin's life. Altogether they reveal that through most of Zworykin's tenure at RCA—until his office was one day unceremoniously shut down—the humble scientist toed the conglomerate's official line. Yet the "father of television" always knew, and it bothered him, that for the millions of dollars RCA pumped into

TV, there was always another man.

This other was not a corporate scientist like Zworykin but a frontier maverick who didn't realize the 20th century was no place for lone inventors. Yet on a budget with far fewer zeroes than Zworykin's, the maverick matched his esteemed competitor stride for stride. RCA czar David Sarnoff tried to buy out that maverick. Failing that, he had RCA try to claim prior rights in the maverick's key patent. And failing that, Sarnoff and RCA kept up years of costly legal battles until finally, for perhaps the first time in Sarnoff's life, he was forced to surrender. Then, using the same iron fist that crushed FM-radio developer Edwin Armstrong, he rolled out a propaganda machine meant to insure that RCA's Legend, and not the maverick, would live on.

The irony is that the real story is much more legendary than the Legend itself. It's a screenwriter's fantasy, part *Reds*, part Frank Capra. Rather than diminish Zworykin's stature, it humanizes him and gives clues to his inspiration. Just as important, it gives credit to a quintessentially American inventor by the name of Philo T. Farnsworth. It becomes, in fact, less a tale of two inventors than the story of how science slid from the 19th century into the 20th.

Early Visions

Television was always a part of that slide. Though the notion of images in crystal balls and magic mirrors had been in humankind's collective consciousness for centuries, the idea of "television" is a 19th-century conceit. The origin of the word itself is speculative. Pioneer sci-

ence-fiction publisher Hugo Gernsback is said to have Anglicized it from the French term around this century's first decade; a Russian, Constantin Perskyi, previously used it in a paper he presented in Paris in 1900. As early as 1907 the word appeared in *Scientific American*.

In any case, it was with the 1837 emergence of the telegraph that inventors all over the world started to poke around for this thing-with-no-name. By the 1840s they'd already found the first clues: still-picture transmission over wires. To accomplish this they came up with the notion of "scanning," wherein an image is sent and reproduced one line at a time. That's the way TV sets work even today.

Some 30 years later a British telegraph operator named Joseph May discovered that the element selenium responds electrically to light—the stronger the light you throw on it, the stronger the electrical current you get. This got people thinking: light falling on a mosaic of selenium cells could be turned into corresponding bits of electricity. (This electrical output is called the "photoelectric effect," and the mosaics "photoelectric cells.") At the receiving end, as the idea evolved, would be a glass screen.

Television stood in this theoretical mist until 1884. That year Paul Nipkow, a Pomeranian engineer studying in Berlin, obtained a German patent for a disc with lots of holes in a spiral pattern. Nipkow figured this disc, spinning furiously, could "scan" a subject point by point. The resulting points of light could be turned into electrical energy and sent in a rapid stream to a photoelectric mosaic. At the receiving end would spin a second, synchronized disc in front of which rested a glass plate where, theoretically, a picture would appear. I say "theoretically" because there's no evidence Nipkow actually built one of these contraptions. Nonetheless, somebody along the line had the great idea to call this invention "the Nipkow disc," and for the next few decades hordes of inventors would use this mechanically operated optical disc as the basis for so-called "mechanical" television systems.

It would be almost 40 years before Farnsworth and Zworykin would decide, separately, to break from that horde. They could see the dead end down mechanical TV's road. They also could see that the expanding science of physics could bring something better: electronic TV. It may be easy today to tell the difference between, say, a mechanical Super-8 movie camera and an electronic video camera—but it wasn't at all apparent in the days of hand-crank Victorolas.

It wouldn't have been apparent even to Farnsworth and Zworykin were it not for some previous serendipitous discoveries. It was Britain's Sir William Crookes, for instance, who discovered that cathode rays—which would become the highway carrying video signals—could exist in a vacuum tube. It was Karl Ferdinand Braun



Vladimir Kosma Zworykin in 1929 (above) and 1940 demonstrating "the first" electronic TV using a kinescope picture tube and iconoscope (right).



who found a way of magnetically controlling electron beams inside Crookes' cathode-ray tube (CRT). And it was Russian physicist Boris Rosing who in 1907 proposed (and later patented) a mechanical TV system with a Braun CRT. All this seems to have prompted a prescient Scotsman named Alan A. Campbell-Swinton to suggest—first in a 1908 letter to the editor, then in a 1911 presentation—that CRTs could be used both as a transmitter (camera tube) and a receiver (picture tube).

Campbell-Swinton was a great thinker, but he didn't follow through. He never constructed the system he proposed. However, if you look at today's video equipment you'll realize that it's his system we're using. To be fair, electronics technology wasn't yet up to Campbell-Swinton's concept; Rosing's own attempts were less than spectacular. Funny thing, though. They inspired Rosing's prize student, Vladimir Kosma Zworykin.

Gravitating to Physics

That Zworykin became more interested in physics than in the family business is a little surprising. His father owned one of the most prosperous steamship lines in all of Czarist Russia and young Vladimir thrived on watching him negotiate. It was straight out of *Fanny and Alexander*, this

childhood of sleighrides and plum puddings—the very stuff conjured by another Russian's *Nutcracker Suite*. The great three-story house in Mourom, where he was born on July 30, 1889, was so huge that Vladimir, his parents, and those of his six siblings who hadn't fled the nest lived, with nursemaids and servants running around, on the second floor only. Zworykin's family was among the first to get electricity and a telephone. Blond and blue-eyed Vladimir was a smart precocious kid. He hunted and ice-skated like his peers—but he was also a self-admitted terror. He accidentally burned down a barn once with some homemade fireworks.

That and other episodes may have been just his genes crying out for him to be a scientist. In his unpublished autobiography, dictated and transcribed in the mid-1940s, one of his earliest memories involves exploring the attic and finding scientific papers belonging to his late uncle Ivan, a Moscow physicist. Adding nurture to nature, though, Zworykin's family always sent him to the best schools. There he

gravitated, one might say, to physics. "In school we had a small collection of instruments which were used to demonstrate physical laws during classes. Very soon I was put in charge of these instruments and often was called to assist the teacher..."

To any turn-of-century youngster so inclined, electricity must have been like a new puppy. Before most of the world knew what it was, Zworykin was tinkering with it. In bustling Mourom, "installation of electrical bells in the houses was in high fashion, and since I was willing to help our relatives and friends in this 'mysterious art,' I received the reputation of 'an expert.'"

So did Philo Taylor Farnsworth, half a world away: Rigby, Idaho. Early 1900s. Frontier ranch land. Too north to be "the Old West." Too south to be "the Great Northwest." Smack in the middle of nowhere.

Farnsworth—born near Beaver, Utah on August 19, 1906—was the eldest of five

stolid Mormon children. His father taught him the legends of Edison and Bell. When Farnsworth was six years old he said he wanted to be an inventor.

Despite the dearth of electricity, young Farnsworth was as good as his word. He read of Einstein and Marconi, even of Nipkow and Rosing. He won a \$25 first prize in a pulp-magazine contest for inventing a magnetized car lock. He'd purposefully crash the farm lighting system just so he could fix it. One day his high-school chemistry teacher popped in on what was supposed to be a study hall and found Farnsworth giving what the teacher later recalled as "the clearest explanation of Einstein's theory of relativity I'd ever heard."

At age 14 he walked up to that same teacher, Justin Tolman, and told him everybody was going about television all wrong. *This* is how you do it. And he sketched it all out on the blackboard. Years later Farnsworth's lawyers would spend weeks tracking down the teacher to have him testify

about what the boy had said and drawn. It didn't do Farnsworth's case much material good since the blackboard had long been erased, but it was still a psychological jolt to the other side. They were playing piano with Mozart.

First Love

Zworykin, a few years earlier, was being groomed as an electrical engineer. His entrance-exam score for St. Petersburg's prestigious Institute of Technology was only high enough to make the second list, though. Vladimir's next best choice seemed St. Petersburg University; the physics department seduced him. Dad, however, didn't like the idea of a shiftless no-account physicist for a son. After some persuading Zworykin *finally* entered the Institute.

Russian politics at the time were as explosive as some thought atoms to be. Zworykin delivered secret packages, handed out leaflets, joined others in a student barricade in support of political prisoners, and spent a couple of weeks in jail with a bunch of other kids. Yet none of this came from any devout ideology—at least any he would admit to in his Cold War adulthood. It was just what you did, his memoirs imply, if you were a Russian college student around 1908.

Zworykin's first love was physics, after all; despite (or maybe because of) his father's wishes, he began staying as late at the physics lab as others did at political rallies. Eventually he caught the eye of the professor in charge: Dr. Boris Rosing, the early television explorer "whose further influence in my life," Zworykin understated, "proved to be a very important one." Rosing asked the student if he wanted to spend some time assisting in a project. "Here I found that he was working on the problem of television, about which I had never heard. This was my introduction to the problem which eventually occupied most of my life." After two more years at the Institute, working with Rosing on the side, Zworykin got his degree in electrical engineering. With his mentor's recommendation he entered the College de France in Paris where he studied X-rays.

Most accounts of Zworykin's academic career leave it at that. Zworykin writes, however, that he never actually got his degree from the College de France or even much cared for the freeform atmosphere. Seeking more formality, he enrolled in the Scharlotenburg Institute of Berlin University. Then World War I intruded into his ordered existence.

"For Russians," he remembered, "it was impossible to remain in Berlin, but also not easy to return home. With great difficulty, I finally succeeded in reaching St. Petersburg [which was about to be renamed Petrograd] through Denmark and Finland, and was immediately mobilized in



Philo T. Farnsworth unveils the innards of his sprawling TV system in 1935.

the Russian Army." He was assigned to a radio communications school, then sent as a private to Grodno, near the Polish front.

Even then the Russian Army wasn't noted for efficiency. His squad couldn't find the unit they were to join, and none of the other units wanted to feed them. They finally stumbled onto a colonel who needed radiomen and Zworykin spent the next several months being praised for jerrybuilding radio components out of spare parts, and yelled at for transmitting messages without code. Zworykin hated the whole ordeal. He finally got back to civilization by having a friendly doctor agree to commit him to a psychiatric hospital for "hallucinations." Back in Petrograd, Zworykin said the doctors saw through his ruse and decided he'd be more useful teaching at the Officers School of Communication. He did so, and soon got his long-overdue commission as an officer.

He also met and quickly married a dental student named Tatiana Vasilieff, whom he curiously never names in his autobiography. It was never, from all indications, an easy marriage. When word soon came to the radio factory where Zworykin was assigned that volunteers were needed for a desert outpost near the border of Chinese Turkestan, Zworykin agreed to ship out. The exoticness appealed to him, but "this decision was also partly influenced by troubles in my personal life. Because of friction and quarreling with my wife, I thought such a trip would afford an advisable temporary separation."

The Big Event

By the time he returned to Petrograd it was January 1917. "...[The] big event finally came on February 17th.... It is hard to describe these first days of the revolution. The general appearance of the city was mostly that of a holiday. Everybody was on the street. Nobody was doing anything. Everyday life came to a standstill." Zworykin ended up a year later in Moscow, where his battery was surprised one night by Ukrainians who were only too happy to demobilize them.

After settling for a short time in Kiev, he and his wife split up for what they thought was the last time. Tatiana evacuated for Berlin; Vladimir returned to Mouron upon word of his father's death. He discovered the family home had been turned into a Museum of Natural Sciences. The family business had of course been nationalized. With a civil war brewing between the Red and White factions, Zworykin decided he had to escape from his homeland.

This wasn't simple. Zworykin hadn't reported to the Red Army as commissioned officers were supposed to, and so the military police were on his trail. One day, on his way home from the radio factory, a car pulled up beside him. It was a friend—with bad news. "...[He] motioned me to enter the car, and speeded in the opposite direction.... He was now working as a driver in the military police force, and by accident



A televised image of Felix the Cat, from an RCA/NBC experiment in the late '20s.

found out there was to be a search of my apartment and an order for my arrest.... [He] took me to the railroad station, from where I telephoned my apartment and found that somebody was already there."

Fortunately Zworykin had been preparing for an abrupt exit. "The best way to leave the country was to obtain identification papers and some sort of official order to go abroad or at least near the border.... Most of the officials at that time...were half-literate, and the most important items in any paper were an impressive letterhead and a large seal." He had friends in a large cooperative organization with offices in the U.S. and in the Siberian city of Omsk. Off to Siberia, then. It was probably the last place anybody would have thought of looking for him.

He fled to Nijni (now Gorky), where his family once had a steamship office. There Zworykin found a former clerk and hunting companion in charge of the place. Vladimir exchanged some jewelry he had for money and a boat ticket to Perm (now Molotov). But the trains from Perm to Omsk were blocked by militant Czechs fighting along the line. Zworykin decided to head north, to the mining regions, from which he might go to Omsk by boat. At the Nadejdinski Mines, however, he was questioned by some unfortunately literate officials and detained—not because he was being hunted but, amazingly, because they thought he was a government inspector. So—why not?—he inspected the place, signed some papers, and left for yet another city from which he hoped to get to Omsk.

The fugitive Zworykin was finally detained at the Ekaterinburg rail station, where he was told by a military patrol to stay in the train. He decided to forego that invitation and hopped a taxi into town. There he got picked up and was returned to the officer who'd told him to stay put in the first place. They carted him off to a hotel-turned-prison. "Several days after my arrest, we heard from the guards that

Czar Nicholas II, who was kept under arrest in the same city...was shot with all his family. This of course caused panic among the prisoners."

Zworykin owed his freedom to the militant Czechs. "When in the next few days food deteriorated to the point of starvation and the preparation for a breakout was underway, somebody learned that the Czechs were already in town and our guards began to disappear. In no time, doors were broken and all the inmates spilled out onto the street.

"It was a great feeling to be free again, even though during the arrest I had lost my money and the suitcase with everything I had.... [S]ome people tried to escape from the city, others were jubilant at the arrival of the Czechs." Zworykin had good reason to be—speaking in German, he became friendly with one of them. And his new friend took him to the city he wanted to reach: Omsk.

Once there he convinced the cooperative to send him to America, where he could study and report on electronic advancements. A marvelous idea! But in the meantime, what with the war, all we have right now is an Arctic expedition. Was he interested?

Zworykin spent several weeks exploring some of the remotest land on earth before finally hopping an icebreaker to Archangel. That city was filled with French, English, and American invasion troops trying to penetrate Russia's northern defenses. Clutching an official directive from Omsk, Zworykin approached both the British and American ambassadors, and after providing the American with several lively discussions of Russia and its culture, charmed his way into a U.S. visa.

The details of Zworykin's emigration to America have been well-recounted elsewhere, but in brief: He spent a month in London, then took the S.S. *Mauritania* to arrive in New York on New Year's Day 1919. (Where he got the money for this is a little uncertain. He writes that he traveled to and lived in New York on his own funds, "which were obtained in Gorky as I have already mentioned." Yet all his money had been confiscated, he said, when he was imprisoned.) Called back to Omsk that March, Zworykin got work as a courier for the Russian Ministry of Transportation. In August he came back to the U.S. for good. When the existing Russian government collapsed, Zworykin's official status ended and the Russian ambassador got him work in New York as a bookkeeper. Zworykin imported his wife from Berlin, took a menial job for a year with Westinghouse in East Pittsburgh, then quit and became a researcher with the C&C Development Company of Kansas City, Missouri. He returned to Westinghouse in April 1923 after a change in management.

The circumstances and the resources had finally come together for Zworykin to live out his dream of creating an all-elec-

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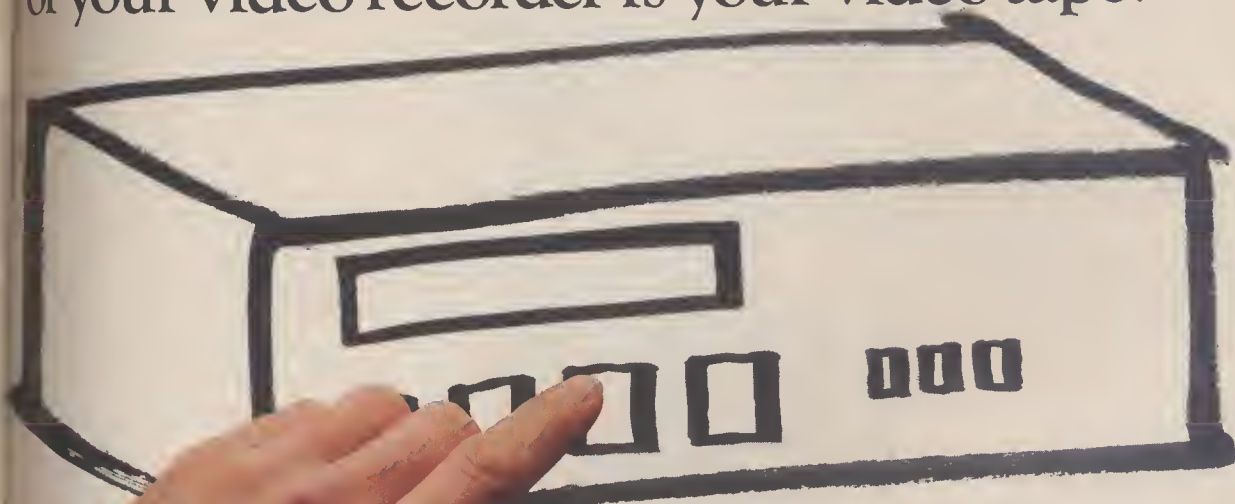
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LE TUBE BOOB

The sad state of French TV

PARIS—A recent bout with the flu made me nostalgic for American television—nostalgic for the days when I would curl up with a pillow and blanket and lose myself in game shows, trashy soaps, reruns, and old Westerns. But you don't have to be an aching expatriate brought up on *Bonanza*, *M*A*S*H*, and *All in the Family* to recognize the mindboggling inadequacies of France's state-run television. Statistics that once showed the average French person watching about two hours daily (less than he listens to the radio) now say viewership has dropped, while sales of movie tickets and high-priced VCRs—a luxury item for the majority of French households—have boomed.

TV in crisis is hardly a new theme. What's new is the government's response. In a country whose Socialist Culture Minister regularly lashes out at what he calls "American cultural imperialism," it comes as the ultimate paradoxes that FR3, the channel that mostly boasts cultural programs—from three-minute spots on classical music and art to two-hour documentaries on experimental theater and vocational schools—should spruce up its Saturday-night primetime programming with two hours of the Disney Channel starting at

8 p.m. Not that there's anything wrong with Donald or Mickey. It's just that if I happen to have outgrown cartoons or gotten over my adolescent crush on Guy Zorro Williams, I have to watch what's on the other two channels, which is considerably worse: an amateurish variety show which (incredibly) tops the ratings, and a made-for-TV thriller which doesn't. Yes, this is the way things are on a typical Saturday night in a country where ordinary tax-paying citizens *pay* for the privilege of turning on the tube.

Not Not Fade Away

This unfortunate situation may well change if French President Francois Mitterrand gets his way. In a historic address televised live from the Elysee Palace last January the Socialist leader announced that private commercial TV stations would finally be allowed to compete with the state channels. But before the president could provide details on the long-awaited project, his image on the screen flickered, then slowly faded away. So much for French technology.

If the presidential announcement made

headlines, it's simply because state control over the media is as French as the crispy *baguette*, and a lot older. Ever since Louis XI nationalized the postal system in the mid-15th century, mass communications have gradually been brought under the government's fat thumb. Newspapers, magazines, and later television and radio have long been used as instruments of persuasion and indoctrination, not information. The government permitted a second channel only starting in 1964, and a third in 1973—way behind Britain and West Germany.

During World War II France's pro-Nazi Vichy Regime created a company to monitor investments and propaganda in radio. A decade later Charles de Gaulle—saying "my opponents have the press, I'll keep TV"—would have his ministers phone TV heads to delete parts of upcoming newscasts line by line. As his culture Minister Andre Malraux asked a stunned John F. Kennedy in 1961, "How on earth do you run a government if you don't control television?"

State control also means government appointees sit atop the big media organizations. While I was tuning in to the Watergate hearings for a daily update on presidential corruption 12 years ago, the French head of a respected radio station was top-

By Marilyn August



pled for "tolerating independence in political reporting." Things have changed little since then. And as this story goes to press, the public is reeling from the resignation of Christine Okrent, France's most popular anchorwoman. The 40-year-old blonde reporter, who earned her stripes at CBS and NBC, left Antenne 2 because she feared a government crackdown on the station's "objective news coverage."

During the 1981 presidential campaign then-opposition leader Mitterrand denounced partisan use of the airwaves, which he claimed had limited his TV appearances. If elected, he promised to free the networks. Mitterrand has not exactly kept that promise. To his credit, however, his administration did create the *Haute Autorite Audiovisuelle*, a watchdog communications agency to administer radio and TV. In 1983 he reluctantly legalized private radio stations, though tough restrictions on advertising still force many stations to survive on government handouts—not exactly the drastic reform French voters expected from the man who was once arrested for participating in a pirate radio broadcast.

No one knows exactly what will come of Mitterrand's unexpected reversal of two years of audiovisual policy that had been strictly enforced by Communications Minister Georges Fillioud. Clearly the government wants to protect TV advertising revenues, maintain some control over content, and avoid the worst excesses of shoddy programming found on private stations the world over. Mitterrand's critics have only to look across the border to Italy where a five-year experiment in private stations has caused chaos on the airwaves and left the once-revered Italian film industry in ruins. Of Italy's 500 independent stations, most feature a mix of low-quality imports from the United States, pornography, cartoons, and music videos.

"Privatization will mean less French TV production," warns Jacques Derout, Vice President of Telecit, the largest French TV production group. Television writers agree: they worry about the "death of creativity."

"We are in favor of news channels. But we have the feeling the government is reneging on its program-development policies," says a spokesman for France's Society of Dramatic Authors and Composers (SACD). "We don't think local stations will have big enough budgets to insure creative programming." The SACD may have a point. As it is, the number of French-made programs on the air is declining. Of the shows featured on the three state-run networks in 1984, only 52 percent were made in France.

But many say freeing the networks won't mean more or better fictional drama—just more entertainment shows, roundtable discussions, and political debates. As Jean Cosmos, France's leading television writer, puts it: "It's much cheap-

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New-Wave French TV

France's all-important and risky attempt to launch a new kind of television began in 1983. TV executives were sick and tired of hearing the usual complaints about French programming: Too timid and self-censoring, too pretentious and highbrow. They were equally worried about the phenomenal success of *Dallas* and *Dynasty*, the two U.S.-made soaps shown here in prime time (in dubbed versions). So in what amounted to a first in television decision-making, an opinion poll was taken to find out what the viewing public really wanted. The answer was unequivocal: the French longed for their own kind, but they wanted them rich and misbehaving.

Eighteen months later French producers came up with *Chateaufallons*, a 26-episode family saga filmed in a sumptuous 15th-century chateau outside Paris. Laced with murder, family feuding, a clash between clans, and plenty of on- and off-camera sex, it more than satisfied an audience long nourished on serialized adventure stories based on history and set in the past.

There is nothing old-fashioned about *Chateaufallons*. Named for the fictionalized sleepy town nestled somewhere in the Loire Valley, the show features the Gallic counterparts of the Ewing tribe—even the Berg family mansion has been dubbed "Southfork-on-the-Loire" by the French press. *Chateaufallons*'s heroes are uncompromising investigative reporters, successful professionals, and ambitious entrepreneurs whose everyday problems include illegitimate births, homosexual suicides, and political corruption.

But the \$6 million series is more than a one-shot bid to rival *Dallas*. *Chateaufallons* is Europe's first long fictionalized series designed to appeal to a mass audience, made with a Hollywood aesthetic. It is thus an important test



'Chateaufallons's' Chantal Nobel, Luc Merenda (above); Antonin Berg, J.R.-style patriarch: *Love in the Loire*.

balloon for what is likely to fill the airwaves in the not-so-distant future if French television stations—public, private, or pay—are to combat the eventual onslaught of cheap imports.

So far, the gamble has paid off. The serial ended in June, but it attracted a wide audience that boasts (besides veteran soap fans) intellectuals, professionals, and top-ranking civil servants. A survey conducted after eight weeks by the general-interest magazine *Paris Match* showed the French-made program leading *Dallas* in popularity, 52 percent to 28 percent.

For the French *Chateaufallons* is more believable and better-conceived than *Dallas* or *Dynasty*. "There is a good storyline, and the dialogue is much better," says Florence Thomas, a Columbia University-educated corporate manager working in Paris. "The characters are actually interesting people with complex personalities." And though most *Chateaufallons* addicts agree that the Ewing *femmes fatales* are sexier than their French counterparts, script-writers have been given the green light to dream up 26 new episodes—guaranteed to keep soap freaks glued to their sets for another season of adulterous affairs and vengeance as old and new money clash. —M.A.

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RELIGHT MY FIRE



The death and resurrection of Jim Morrison

-on cassette

By Steven Grant

I first heard of the Doors through a letter in *Circus* magazine. A girl wrote in complaining that Jim Morrison only wanted everyone to hate everything. I must check this out, I thought. That was in 1968.

The band was legendary from the beginning, startling the pop scene with flowing melodies, obsessive poetry, and Grand Guignol keyboards. It had the feel of something new and unpredictable—and Morrison lived up to the promise. His appetites and stage antics were legendary. There were banned promo films, arrests, and rumors of, uh, unusual performances. Only disaster could have catapulted Morrison any further into pop mythology.

That happened in 1971 when he died in a Paris bathtub, supposedly of a heart attack. It looked like the end for the Doors. The remaining members of the group—Ray Manzarek (keys), Robby Krieger (guitar), and John Densmore (drums)—carried on for two more albums, then called it a day. The music was over.

Today the Doors are back with their most ambitious project to date, the MCA video album *Dance on Fire* (\$39.95), complete with a new digital sound-processing system developed by their old producer Paul Rothchild to superbly upgrade their old recordings. A revival that had been building since the late '70s, culminating in last year's concert LP *Alive She Cried*, paved the way. The album spawned two acclaimed videos, MCA entered the picture, and *Dance on Fire* was born.

A Video 'Set'

"The concept was to make the video like a concert set, a Doors set," Ray Manzarek explains. Two documentaries on the band had already appeared without really illuminating the Doors mystique, and the

surviving members decided to give their audience something that would. "The set is, in a sense, vaguely historical chronological. We start with 'Break on Through,' the first video we ever made, and our sets would always end with 'The End.' We tried to pace the video like a set, with peaks and valleys to give a sense of the Doors live. Six or seven videos of shows already existed. How do you put them together? What do you use as transitional devices? How do you go from one song to another song? Is there just a direct cut, or is there something that ties them together? We thought what ties it together is Jim's poetry. Then which poems do you choose, which portions of poems? How do you sprinkle them in?"

"We didn't want *Dance on Fire* to be a linear, chronological, historical document of the career of the Doors. We wanted the viewer to have an emotional experience, to listen to the music, listen to the words, see Morrison jumping around, see the other musicians play—that's the experience!—and it wouldn't have anything to do with a time frame. We weren't trying to do The Doors Story. It was a conscious attempt *not* to do that."

Intentionally or not, the resulting product has a vivid "you are there" feel. Material from those years is scarce—what there is exists only through television and the band's foresight. "Films were always an important part of the Doors. That's why we have all that footage," says Manzarek, who attended UCLA film school with Morrison. "We brought Paul Ferrara, a friend from UCLA, on the road with us in '68 and '69. He was our photographer and cameraman. We rented a 16mm camera and a tape recorder and started shooting. We were going to make some Doors movies, but we never got around to it. Jim died."

What road footage Ferrara shot is prominent, montaged with variety-show clips and promotional films like "Break on Through" and the notorious "Unknown Soldier," which shows Morrison being "executed" by the rest of the band. Inadvertently, the result gives a taste of the weirdness the Doors lived in and through, the mystical and manic elements of Morrison's psyche and the psyche of the '60s.

"You have to hand it to Elektra Records," John Densmore says. "They paid for the films. They were pretty hip then, a small creative company. They're not so small anymore." The practice of sending out promo clips to small TV shows was known in 1968, but Elektra shifted from concert footage to actual minimovies, the forerunners of today's video. While "Break on Through" met with great acceptance, the politically charged "Unknown Soldier" blew up in their faces.

"There's the execution scene where Jim has this ridiculous mouthful of blood," says Densmore. "Then again, it was the middle of the Vietnam war. We showed it at the Fillmore East. That was the only time it was ever shown, on this big screen, and at the end, where Jim chants 'the war is over,' we started playing along with the soundtrack, and people started crying and jumping around like the war was really over. That gave it legendary status."

The Reel Thing

"That, and the fact that it showed American guys being killed," Manzarek agrees. "That was never shown on TV. You'd see guys going into battle, then maybe night fire and stuff like that, and then you'd see Viet Cong dead. We knew our guys were being killed too, but you never saw it. We used that. We had an American body beginning to decompose. The kid smiles, and it goes to the end of World War II. That was too much for television. Elektra sent it to all the Saturday dance shows and the response was, 'No way in hell are we going to play this on *Sam Riddle's Dance Party* at 11 a.m.! Are you guys crazy?'"

"At the end, the Doors just walk away. It's interestingly symbolic, the three Doors walking away without Morrison. None of us thought anything of it at the time, but seeing it last year, when we started putting *Dance on Fire* together—there we are, three guys still alive and the other guy is gone."

Manzarek also found other moments unnerving. "In 'Roadhouse Blues,' where those two cops grab Jim, that's New Haven. That's the bust, the actual arrest on



Manzarek on the set of 'Strange Days,' a video shot but not used.

stage. I'd never seen that before." The clip ends with Morrison sitting next to a bleeding woman who had been hit by a chair at a concert. "The Singer Bowl, New York. The Doors and the Who. Wouldn't you like to have been in that audience? The Who opened for us, then on came the Doors—and they pulled the power or something, and had a big riot."

"It was actually after we left the stage," Densmore recalls. "It was too much for them. Everyone went crazy and just destroyed the place, a full-scale riot. That girl got hit by a piece of chair and was brought to the dressing room. She was just an innocent bystander."

If the Doors' private footage is powerfully evocative of their eventful careers, the clips taken from network-television appearances can be hilarious—as "Touch Me," from *The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour*, shows. "TV shows are the same today," Densmore says, "insofar as how people are expected to look and behave. I remember that session. We were some of the early longhairs and here's Jim in leather, and nobody in TV looked like that. We walk out and everyone's jaw hits the pavement. Silence. We lip-synced and got off."

"We included that clip as comic relief," says Manzarek. "The Smothers Brothers Orchestra plays with us. They said, 'We want you to do 'Touch Me.' We said, 'We can't. It's got all these horns and strings.' The floor manager or somebody said, 'Here's the horn and string players right here.' We looked at them, all these balding men in tuxedos, and said, 'Good idea. Why don't you bring them all onstage?' Everybody onstage. Strings over here, horns over there. We brought Curtis along, the black guy who plays horn at the end. He actually plays on the record. All the rest

were Smothers Brothers Orchestra. It was ridiculous."

"Some critics," Manzarek continues, "have asked why we only show these sexy shots of Jim, instead of later when he was bearded and getting a little paunchy. We don't have any. We shot in '68 and '69. That's '70-'71. By the middle of '69 we had enough footage. So that's all we have. Jim does have a beard in 'The Soft Parade.' That's the only bearded footage we had."

But "The Soft Parade" is absent from *Dance on Fire* because the lengthy number would have unbalanced the video. It's probably the last of the Doors footage—and a candidate for a followup project. Its place on the video is taken by "L.A. Woman"—which, as Densmore puts it, "is just a better song. Everyone lists it among their favorite Doors songs."

Our Town

"It was also our chance to show our side of Los Angeles," says Manzarek, who directed the clip, the only new material on *Dance on Fire*. "Frank Sinatra did 'L.A. Is My Lady' and Randy Newman 'I Love L.A.' Here's another side. We love this

city too. The Doors came from here. At that point in the video you've had Morrison, Morrison, Morrison, and then 'Wild Child,' which is half-Morrison. Then Morrison sort of goes away for awhile, through 'L.A. Woman.' Now let's see what the Doors are about, what L.A. is about. We get back to Jim, don't worry. By the end of the show you'll have plenty of Jim. In 'The End'—Harrison Ford was one of the cameramen—you can watch him for 12 minutes."

Manzarek is clearly stung by charges of violence in "L.A. Woman" (in which a starlet is slain by her lover, played by X's John Doe). "I hate violence in videos. I'd like to see art in video, something probing the human condition. Nothing is more obvious or easy than violence, and the overload of violence in videos is pandering to baser human instincts. There are more exciting dark areas to probe."

"Yet there's no real violence in that. All that happens is a knife appears. It's the art of cinema to suggest. They embrace and he opens a knife, so you know what's going to happen, but you never see anything. Then the headlines come out: ORGY OF MURDER, ACTRESS SLAIN, HILLSIDE SLAYER KILLS TWO. Those are actual L.A. headlines."

"Jim sings, 'Motel money murder madness change the mood from glad to sadness.' And we do. The music comes down and stays down for awhile. Then it builds back up and hits its peak and takes you on out. That's L.A. We're not living in a garden of Eden, unfortunately. We open with a shot of the sun over water and a palm tree. Down the palm trees, and there's a car coming at you. L.A. is a beautiful place to live, but there's that motel-money-murder-madness side of it. Scares me, man. I'm glad I haven't had any contact with it."

"It's the dark side of L.A.," Densmore says. "The Santa Ana winds come up and pyros come out and light fires. The Doors didn't invent Charles Manson or the Hillside Strangler."

No, but at times it seems as if the Doors created—or recreated—Jim Morrison. More projects are forthcoming, including a long awaited bio-pic of the late rock poet.

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The four-Door model around the time of *Waiting for the Sun*, 1968.



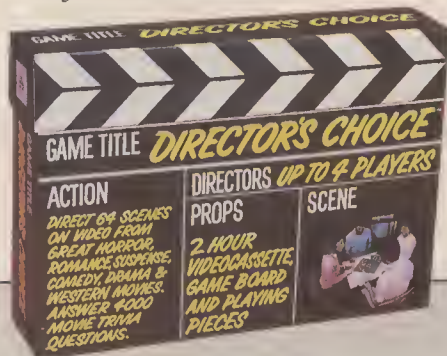
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BETA WATCH OUT

The senior
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headed for
serious
trouble

By Roderick
Woodcock

There was a time when Betaphiles could shrug off the increasing dominance of VHS. Secure in their conviction of Beta's technical edge, still remembering the time when Beta *was* consumer video, they could counter mounting evidence of VHS's expanding popularity by quoting Mark Twain: "The reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated." They could derisively refer to the rival format as "Clunkovision" (the VHS's M-load makes for a slow and mechanically inelegant visual scan) and look askance at the larger VHS cassette's reproduction of a minutely inferior picture. But though prerecorded titles are still routinely issued both in Beta and VHS, finding the Beta tapes in stores is getting harder and harder—especially outside urban areas and away from the East and West Coasts. For that and other reasons it's now reasonable to ask: is Beta finished?

The beleaguered Beta camp received yet another blow in mid-April with Toshiba's announcement that, as in Europe and Japan, it would immediately begin to sell both VHS and Beta VCRs in the U.S. and Canada. That brings to nearly 80 the number of VHS licensees worldwide, compared to less than a dozen for Beta—and leaves Sony, inventor of Beta and the first to sell it, as the only company manufacturing and selling Beta to the exclusion of VHS. Aiwa makes and sells Beta VCRs and for several years has been building them

for Sony, which owns a majority interest in the smaller company. In Japan, Pioneer is also selling Sony-built Beta VCRs.

All the other Beta backers—Toshiba, NEC, Tokyo Sanyo, Sears, and Radio Shack—now sell both Beta and VHS. Tokyo Sanyo, parent company of California-based Sanyo Electric, makes VHS equipment for U.S. sales under the Fisher and Radio Shack brand names. Sanyo says it too will stick with the Beta format in the U.S. Sanyo spokesman Michael Ollins points out that in 1984, Sanyo moved ahead of Sony as the number one Beta brand in the U.S. owing to its extensive line of modestly priced VCRs. Sanyo has recently become a two-format company as well with the introduction of a two-piece portable 8mm setup which also will sell under the Sears label. Sony has entered 8mm too with a full-featured camcorder, in an effort to cultivate the still underdeveloped portable-video market. (See this month's "TV Den" for more details.)

The Numbers

But if the official line at Sony and Sanyo seems to be "Beta forever," their joint introduction of newer 8mm equipment and the continuing downward spiral of the overall Beta market share against VHS (somewhere between 14 and 16.5 percent depending on the figures you go by)* is sending a shudder through the ranks of

*In 1982, 18.8 percent of all VCRs sold in the U.S. were Beta machines. In 1983, only 14 percent were Betas, a more than 21 percent decrease in its market share. From there on, the picture gets cloudy. Some industry watchers say that the introduction of Beta Hi-Fi has increased Beta's share of the pie by as many as two percentage points. But while total VCR sales figures are available for 1984, a reliable breakdown by format is not.—Ed.

millions of Betaphiles everywhere, many of whom, after having invested heavily in Beta format equipment and cassettes over the past ten years are now wondering, quite legitimately, if they did, after all, back a losing horse.

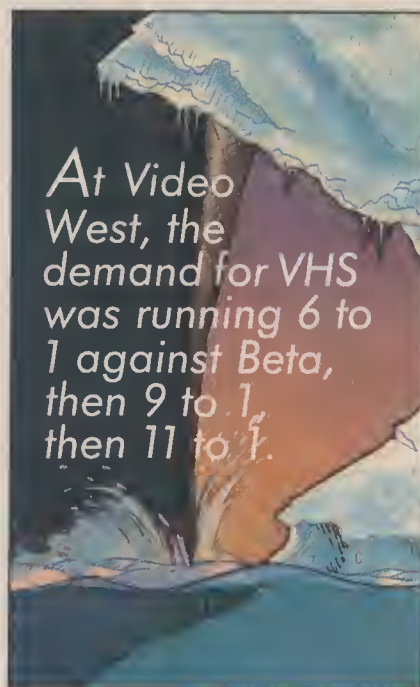
Despite the rash of recent defections of Beta manufacturers to the rival Video Home System (VHS), Sony has consistently reiterated its commitment to the format it invented. Last April, on the heels of Toshiba's announcement that it would start selling VHS as well as Beta, Sony introduced an extensive line of new Betamax VCRs including its most sophisticated model to date: the SL-HF900, incorporating Hi-Fi audio and SuperBeta video recording, which offers a 20 percent increase in resolution over conventional Beta VCRs. While introducing its 8mm camcorder, Sony also began delivering the BMC-550K Super Betamovie (Toshiba dropped its version).

In announcing all these new products last spring, Sony exec Neil Vander Dussen and spokesman Jay Sato reassured Sony dealers and the press that Sony will continue to sell the Beta format—alone if necessary—as long as there is a demand for it. But how long will there be a demand for a format that is now going to feel the sales squeeze between both 8mm and VHS? Sony is clearly counting on 8mm becoming the format of the future (Kodak, Polaroid, G.E., Canon, Sanyo, and Sears have already deployed 8mm systems), and the new smaller format is expected, in time, to outweigh both Beta and VHS as the majority format.

But that won't happen overnight. It has taken 10 years of ongoing research and development to mass-produce a basic Beta/VHS VCR selling for less than \$300. And those basic VCRs are selling by the tens of thousands to eager folks who want to time-shift favorite shows or play prerecorded rental movies.

Currently, few prerecorded movies exist on 8mm, and that probably won't change for a few years—at least not until a couple of things happen. Just as it took a long time for the Beta/VHS rental market to develop (creating a population of VCRs to play the tapes had to precede the appearance of the home-video program companies and the rental stores that carry their wares), no one is going to spend money duplicating movies on 8mm cassettes for fewer than twenty or thirty thousand players. Compare that to the more than fifteen million half-inch VCRs already in American homes. So while the 8mm system matures, lots of half-inch machines will continue to be sold—either as new machines to people who don't already have a VCR, or as replacements to folks who have owned a VCR for several years and have either worn out their machine or want a more sophisticated one.

While VHS has outsold Beta in the last decade to the point where it has incontestably won the selling war, the population of



Beta VCRs in U.S. homes still numbers in the millions. These people have extensive tape collections too, and will always want blank tapes. Plus, as these Beta machines wear out, their owners will want to replace them with newer models. Sony is ready to fill that need, as are Sanyo and presumably NEC, Toshiba, and Sears, though the latter three companies also want a share of the VHS pie.

The Sony Line

But Sony is not about to concede that its VCRs are relevant only as replacement machines. The company insists that if the first-time buyer is given a full and detailed comparison of features and selling points like picture quality, he'll still opt for a Betamax. Sony also insists that not everyone who buys a VCR will want to use it in its simplest form as just another household appliance; the true video hobbyist will want to do more with his equipment than just some occasional time-shifting and rental of movie cassettes. Sony hopes that these video connoisseurs (who probably own VCRs of both formats) will appreciate the technical advantages of Beta over VHS when it comes to shooting their own tapes. Finally, Sony has stressed that its 8mm camcorder is not a product that will be sold in a vacuum, but is designed to coexist with other formats including Beta. New products like the RM-E100 Editing Interface are designed to enhance its creativity, allowing consumers to make professional-style edits between original 8mm tapes and between one or two Betamaxes.

But while Sony's analysis stresses the active side of home-video editing and moviemaking, it understates the more passive—but more popular—use of a home VCR: as a player for prerecorded movies that rent for as little as one or two dollars a night from the video stores that have sprung up on virtually every street corner and mall in America. While every title re-

leased by a major company is duplicated in both formats, more dealers than ever before are sidestepping the costs of a double inventory by stocking just VHS. And that growing preference for VHS rental tapes is turning more and more consumers away from the Beta format.

Where most merchants go out of their way to carry the merchandise their customers want, the booming video-rental business has—at least in some areas—created an anomaly: dealers who are prepared to deliberately disregard a percentage of their potential customers by saying in effect: "If you want to rent from us, we don't mind having your business, but get a VHS machine first."

In the Field

One example is Video West, a prospering rental store with a good location along the trendier part of West Hollywood's Santa Monica Boulevard. Store-owner Leah Marinelli reports that her recent "VHS only" decision was a result of declining demand for Beta. When the store opened in early 1983 it stocked both formats and Beta rentals accounted for about 25 percent of its business. By the end of the year the demand for VHS was running 6 to 1 against Beta, and 9 to 1 by mid-1984. The disparity had increased to 11 to 1 by January of '85, when the decision was made to stock VHS only. The move hasn't negatively affected overall rentals and Video West has recently opened another store in Studio City, joining hundreds of other VHS-only rental stores prospering in Los Angeles' sprawling San Fernando Valley. Other L.A.-area stores have taken a similar tack. At Nickelodeon in Beverly Hills' Century City Shopping Mall, the emphasis is more on sales than on video rentals, but what rental the store does is only in the VHS format and mostly confined to titles found on *Billboard* magazine's Top 40 list.

But as in most other big cities across the country, Beta titles can be found if you know where to look. Things are usually so busy at sprawling Tower Video on Sunset Boulevard that customers wanting to rent or return a cassette have to take a number from a machine and wait their turn. According to "Slash," Tower's video manager (this is Hollywood), Tower's customers come from all over the L.A. area—there's another store in the San Fernando Valley—and the store must cater to videophiles of both formats. While Tower always stocks more VHS titles than Beta, its Beta share is better than the national average at roughly 35 to 40 percent. While Tower doesn't sell VCRs, it has often recommended a Beta VCR to new customers wanting to buy a VCR just to rent tapes, due to the lower cost of many Beta machines (less than \$200 in the L.A. area). But let's face it, this is hardly surprising; for Betaphiles, Tower is the only game in town.

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continued on page 120

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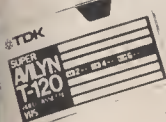
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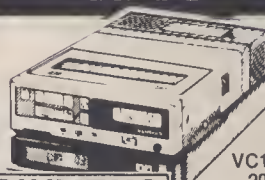
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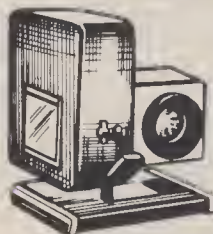
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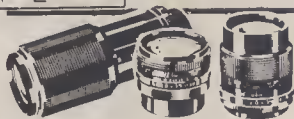
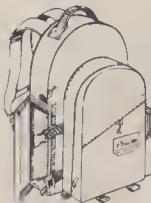
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Mr. Blandings Wires His I Dream House

I sometimes think our house on the hill wouldn't miss us at all if we failed to come home one night. After all, it has its own telephone system, a sophisticated computer network, a well-balanced diet of filtered electricity, and a three-channel video cable system. We just get in the way.

It wasn't easy getting wired—the builder certainly didn't know the first thing about it, and I'm not sure the electrician had set foot inside an electronics store in 20 years. So with one eye on the building and electrical code and the other on our already dwindling checkbook balance, we did most of the work ourselves. We had the advantage of being able to wire up the house while it was being built, installing cable and wire through still-open walls and ceilings. But much of what we learned could easily be applied to a "retrofit" of an existing house or apartment.

Here were our goals: a modern video system that included both cable TV and video-recorder feed throughout the house; audio wiring and speakers for music and stereo TV sound where needed; a telephone system with outlets on each floor and a special line for telecommunications; a temperature-control system that allowed several heating zones and relied upon a computer clock for a day-by-day usage pattern; sufficient electrical current for a houseful of electronic devices, with extra outlets at central control points; an independent filtered electrical system for my home office with its computer equipment; a computer-controlled switching system to turn on or off interior and exterior lighting; and a burglar alarm system to keep watch over it all.

Planning for Fun

The opening step in creating our electronic house was the drawing of what I called the "entertainment usage plan." We needed to understand where we expected to watch television, answer the phone, listen to the stereo, and use the computer; we also needed to analyze where the various "resources" like power, telephone, video,

and audio circuits would come from, and we had to take into account the likely placement of major pieces of furniture.

Here's what we had to work with: a two-story contemporary Colonial with four upstairs bedrooms, and downstairs living-room, dining room, kitchen, and recreation room. We also had a full basement and attic. We adapted a copy of the blueprint for the house for our plan, but you could also draw your own.

The first decision involved placement of major control centers for the equipment. The first-floor recreation room was the obvious choice for control of the video and audio equipment; the telephone terminal block and splitter could go in the basement. On the second floor I selected a linen closet for installation of an audio switchbox and volume control for the speakers there.

When I told the builder a bit about our plans, he smiled and his eyes rolled as he began toting up the extra charges. (We decided later that he did all his calculations in a base-\$75 mathematical system.) His level of interest dropped considerably when we told him we wanted to do the work ourselves.

"You'll have about a week to do your work, between the time when the carpenters are done framing and the sheetrock installers put up the walls," he said. What he didn't tell us was that this was also the week when the electrician would string the wires, insulators would install the fiberglass, and the plumbers would lug the furnace downstairs and upstairs.

Our first special arrangement was with the electrician. Because of the requirements of the local building code and our construction contract with the builder, all of the house's power wiring had to be handled by a licensed electrician—unless you have that same level of experience yourself, I would recommend you leave the electrical

By Corey Sandler

work to an expert too.

We started by checking the power-supply plans for the house. We had an incoming 240/120-volt line, entering a circuit-breaker service panel with a 150-ampere capacity. None of our high-tech electronic devices—VCRs, personal computers, color televisions, stereo systems—draw more than a few amps each. The real power gluttons in most houses are refrigerators, air conditioners, and electric heaters, boilers, and ranges. For our natural-gas-heated home we decided that 150 amperes was sufficient for present and future needs.

Next we took a tour of the house with the electrician, discussing the needs of each room, taking into account where we expected to place major pieces of furniture and home-entertainment equipment. In the rec room on the main floor, for example, we knew we would have perhaps 10 electronic devices. Most building codes specify that no point along the floor line in any walled space be more than six feet from an electrical outlet. For our heavily electronic home, we instructed the electrician to install a few extra power outlets in critical entertainment areas, wherever possible splitting the source for any one room between two different electrical lines and circuit breakers. In the bedrooms, we selected the outlets we wanted to have controlled by switches at the doorways—nightstand lights, yes; VCRs and computers, no.

I earn my living feeding the electronic memory of a computer with words, and so I next addressed myself to making certain

the power supply for my office was adequate, dependable, and safe. Our house is out in the country at the far end of an already-strained electrical power system. Though the incoming lines were buried, affording some protection against lightning strikes, I still worried about the quality of the incoming juice. I also wanted to make certain that the various electronic devices in our new home did not cause the machine that paid for it all to have any difficulty.

Computer Care & Feeding

My first step, then, was to ask the electrician to install a dedicated electrical line direct to the office from the circuit box in the basement. This would insure that the computer and peripherals received enough power, and also would isolate that one line from voltage fluctuations and other interferences that might be caused by other major power draws. I had the electrician place the outlet on the wall behind the spot where the desk was to go. Later, the first step in setting up the office equipment was to plug a pair of electronic-spike suppressors and electrical-line filters into each of the outlets on this 20-amp line. The dedicated line was to be used for the computer, hard disk, and monitor only. Lighting, printers, and other devices drew current from other lines in the room.

The electrician marked the work he was going to perform by hammering into place an appropriate plastic electrical box at each location. (Some building codes may require metal boxes.) Within a day he and a crew had returned and bored holes in the studs and flooring and installed the cables

throughout the house. Each line ended in one of the boxes.

Next I checked with the cable company that was just beginning to expand into our area. I found the location of its buried line along the curb and made arrangements for installation of a feed from there to our house before driveways and landscaping were installed. (Six months later, when the cable company came back to run the drop lines to our neighbors, it sent its trenching machine across golf-course-like lawns, perfectly maintained asphalt drives, and handpicked rock gardens on every house on the block but ours. I'm not sure the neighbors have yet forgiven us our foresight.)

After the electrician had done his work, we consulted our entertainment-usage plan and returned to the house with our own set of electrical boxes—I managed to find approved plastic boxes in a different color from the ones used by the electrician. Wherever possible I planned to string my wire through extra space left in the holes drilled by the electrician or the plumber, being careful not to damage the electrical wires in any way or to pack any holes too tightly. Standard video and audio cable is pretty well-shielded against electrical interference and can be placed quite close to modern electrical cable without problem.

Working from the rec-room control center site, I began routing the video cables. I bought the best-quality video cables I could find—this was wire I never hoped to see again. I ran one line directly down to the basement to be the input line for the cable

continued on page 124

Wiring Your Own

There I was: hanging 40 feet in the air, my feet hooked under an exposed joist, my left hand hanging onto a roof rafter, and my right arm stretching to grab hold of the end of a length of coaxial cable for the internal video system. Two floors down in the basement, my helper fed the wire up through the narrow holes bored through the wooden sole plates.

Nevertheless, do-it-yourself wiring in a house under construction is relatively easy because the house's skeleton is exposed. The holes drilled through framing lumber by electricians and plumbers provide convenient conduits for cable. Be careful to do your work *after* the professionals have done theirs unless you are willing to risk their wrath—and an additional bill—for a real or imagined interference. If you need to drill your own, don't count on an available electrical supply—bring a hand auger or a battery-powered drill.

Install your own electrical boxes for video, audio, and telephone lines and run the wires through the cutouts—look at the electrician's work for a guide to proper placement. (The sheetrockers will cut relatively neat rectangles in the wallboard to expose the boxes.) Leave yourself an extra foot of cable, tying at least one large knot in the cable to guard against the wire being pulled out of the box. Bring a supply of tags or labels with you and mark on them the purpose of each wire.

As we found out, the week between completion of framing and installation of wallboard is also the time when the insulation crew passes through the house putting fiberglass in place in the exterior walls and some of the ceilings. Try to get your work done before the insulation is installed—otherwise you'll have to move some of the panels to install the wiring.

Our do-it-ourselves project went pretty well, with only a few minor mishaps. One of the telephone cables was apparently accidentally pulled out during the installation of the wallboard—we were able to fish it back through the wall after we moved in. Another annoyance we discovered weeks later when the painting crew came through with spray guns. All the walls received a heavy coat of eggshell white—obliterating my tags and labels in the process.

How, though, would you go about installing wire in an apartment or older house? First of all, use the open areas of the attic or basement to string long lengths of wire wherever possible. The basic skill for wiring inside the walls or between floors is called "fishing." The trick is to use a stiff piece of wire—a straightened coathanger or picture-framing wire are often employed—to pull or snag more flexible wire. Other tricks include running low-voltage wires (video, audio, and computer cables among them) through heating or air-conditioning ducts. You can also hide wires by running them behind molding and trim, under the edge of carpeting, and beneath door floor plates. Whatever device you use, be careful not to run nails or staples through the wiring.

If your house or apartment was built after about 1950, you'll probably find that most wall studs and floor joists are spaced about 16 inches apart from center to center and most interior walls will be about 3-1/2 inches thick. Older houses are much less predictable. A useful tool to help locate wooden studs or other solid structures (including pipes) in the wall is an electronic stud finder, which works like a miniature sonar device.

—C.S.

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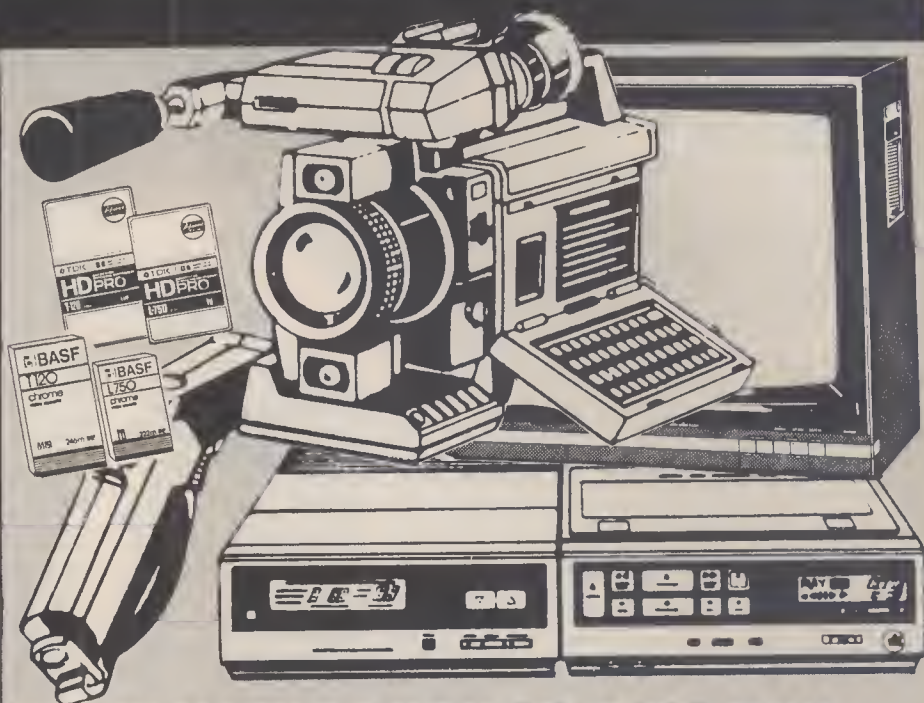
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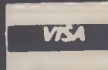
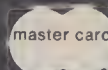
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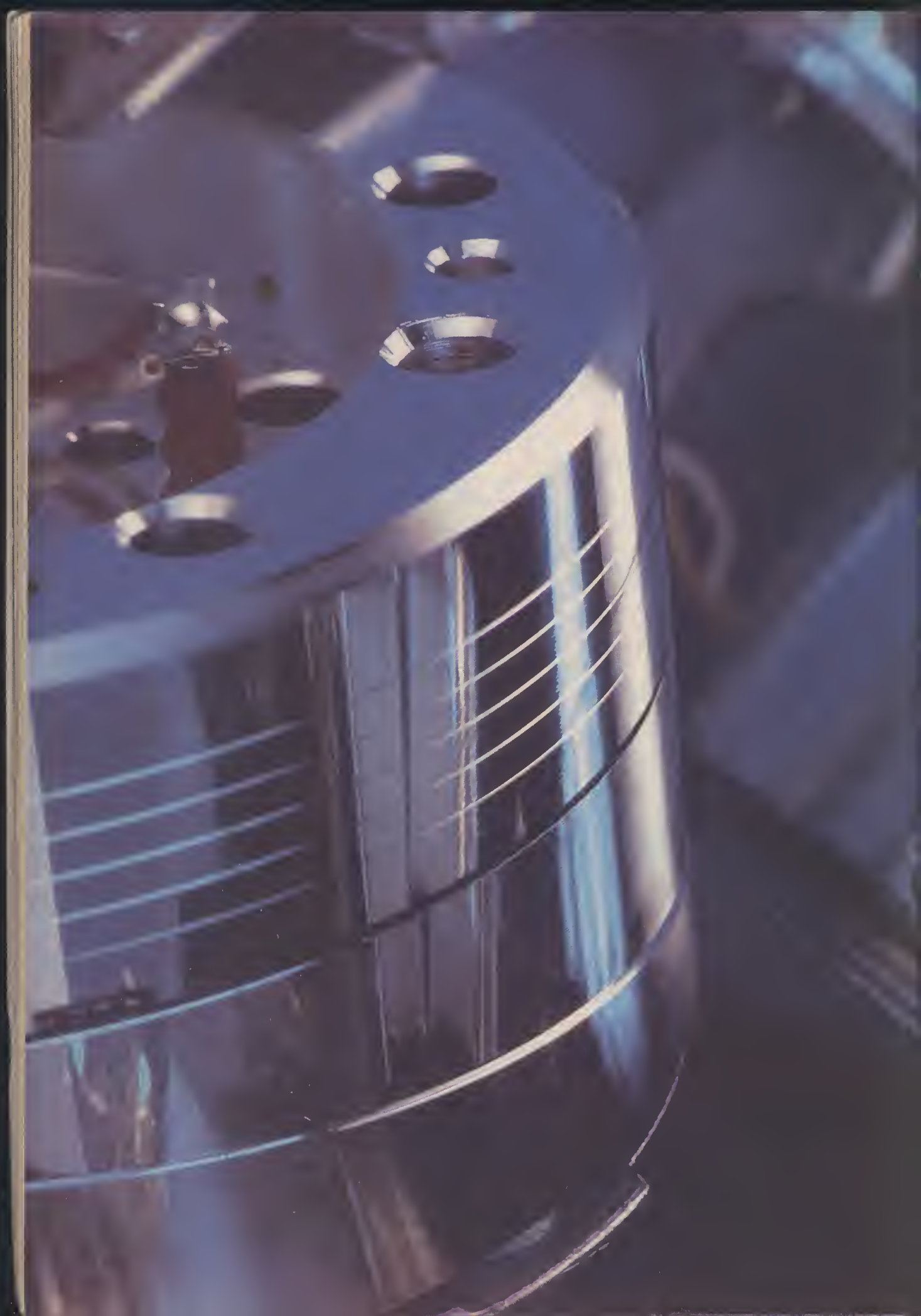
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Videoheads

What they do, how they do it *Revisited*

By Roderick Woodcock

Heads up! A VCR's nothing without 'em—those shiny drum-mounted cylindrical objects that record and play back pictures and, if the machine is so equipped, Hi-Fi sound. (Conventional audio is another story as it's handled by a stationary head not unlike what you'd find in a cheap audio-cassette deck.) Even the most stripped-down Beta or VHS machine has at least two, and VHS Hi-Fis can have up to (gasp) seven video heads.

Why count? Well, if you believe in knowing what you're paying good money for, you'll want to know at least a little about video heads and the capabilities or limits various combinations can bring. Be forewarned: some of the following discussion

will stultify the senses of many readers, and some longtime "TV Den" readers will suspect (correctly) that they've heard some of this before. But the most serious among you already know the value of VIDEO's ongoing course in Video Heads 101, and the ongoing march of innovation inevitably brings on the need for a periodic update.

In the simplest configuration, every VHS and Beta VCR uses two video heads. Each head is used to record or play the video information contained in one video "field," which is in turn one-half of the information contained in a single video "frame," 30 of which appear on-screen in one second. And 30 revolutions per second is also the speed at which the video

drum rotates. But the two heads aren't the same. Since they're really tiny electromagnets, each has a tiny slit or "gap" milled into it to provide the north and south poles needed to magnetize the tape. And since each head has to lay down a magnetic track on the tape that's right next to the one that's just been recorded by its brother on the other side of the drum, the angle of the heads is mismatched slightly in order to prevent interference or "crosstalk" between the signals from the two tracks.

This "azimuth" difference amounts to plus or minus 6 degrees in the VHS system, 7 in Beta, and 10 in the new 8mm format. In other words, one video head, with the angle of its gap aligned plus 6, 7, or 10 degrees from the perpendicular, re-

Les Mors



cords one field of video—while the other head, with the angle of its gap aligned minus 6, 7, or 10 degrees, records the other field. Hope you got that part straight, because once you understand what each video head does, it's easier to appreciate how those noiseless "matched" azimuth special effects work.

3-Headed VCRs

Which brings us to VCRs with three video heads. How do they work? Again, two heads are used to record and play at each speed. But since a single video head can't be used by itself to reproduce the two adjacent video fields needed to make up one complete video frame, that third head teams up with one of the other heads to deliver noise-free special effects like still frame and slow motion. Why "noise free"? Because early special-effects systems (as on JVC's HR-6700, circa 1979) used adjacent video heads to scan both fields to deliver a complete TV frame. The problem: since each frame really consisted of the output of two separate fields, when fast-moving action was being reproduced

on the screen, the image recorded in one field would be a little different from the image in the next—resulting in a jerky, jittery effect on the screen.

The solution, which originated with Sony and was first introduced on the SL-5800 four years ago, was to reduce the video system to its lowest common denominator (a single field) and reproduce it twice to create a composite video frame built out of two identical fields. Videowise, this was a cheat—constructing one complete frame out of a single field rather than two adjacent ones. But since not much action takes place in 1/60th of a second, and the on-screen pictures that resulted were so much clearer and sharper, the trick was worth it.

Which brings us back to that third head. To read the information recorded on the tape by the video head with which it matches up, the third head must share the same azimuth—the angle of the little gap—or it won't be able to pick up a proper signal. Sony's breakthrough, then, was to design a three-head system that uses two mismatched video heads for regular re-

cording and playback (let's call them A and B), along with a single SFX (special effects) only head (call it AA) which together can deliver clean special effects. This system has been used in all of Sony's high-end VCRs up to now including the SL-2500 and 2700 Beta Hi-Fi VCRs. And it's now finding its way into other Beta units like Sanyo's new super-small VCR-3.

Some VHS machines use a similar three-head system. There's RCA's VKT-300 for example—a deck that uses two video heads for recording and playback (at all three VHS speeds) as well as a third head optimized to deliver a noise-free still frame.

4-Headed VCRs

Now, what's all this fuss about four video heads? Four-head VCRs are a complex business. Actually, five-, six-, and seven-head VCRs are all really four-head VCRs as well—but with a few flourishes added to offer SFX and Hi-Fi audio recording.

Anyway, the first four-head VCR to appear in either the Beta or VHS format came

Head Count

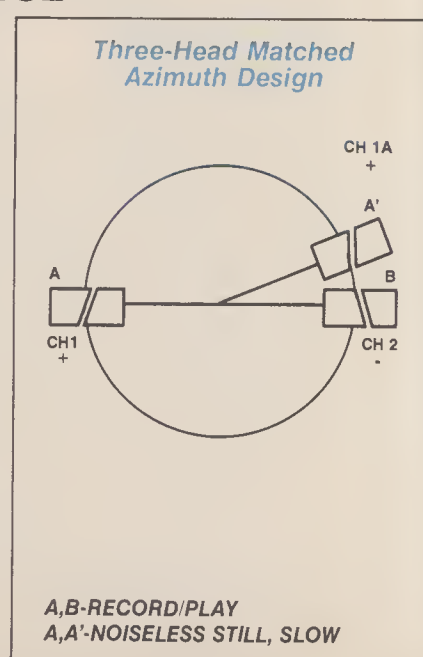
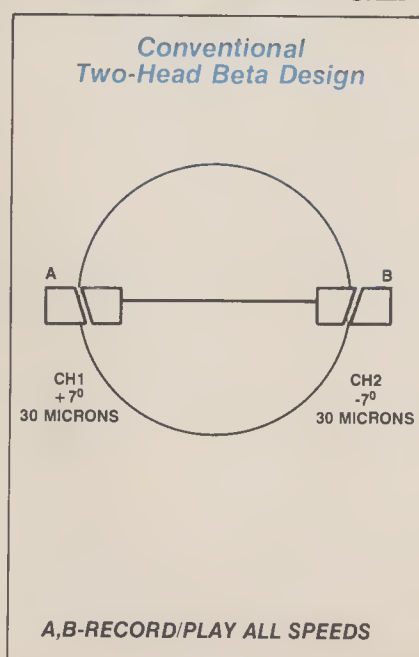
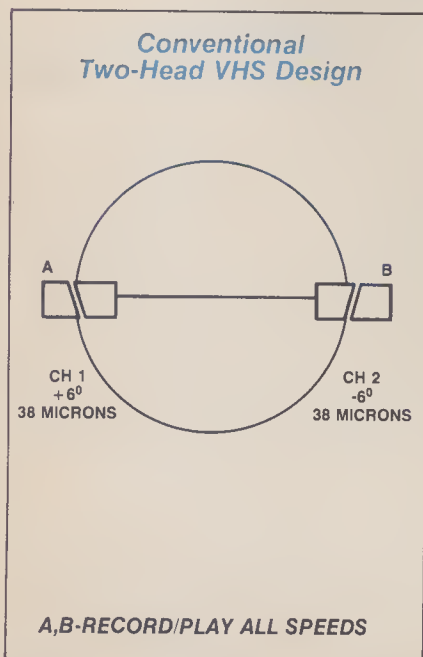
How many video heads do you really need? If you're just planning to record programs at the slow speed for later viewing or watch prerecorded videocassettes, a simple two-head machine probably will serve your purposes. That's because most VCRs perform about the same at the slowest speed, and for straight playback at any speed, head width isn't as important as it is during recording. Multispeed VCRs with two heads can be capable performers as long as you record everything at the slowest speed—where the heads are designed to work best.

The extra set of wider video heads on four-head machines is placed there to improve recording quality and special-effects playback (still frame, slow motion, visible search) at the faster standard speed, SP. So if you intend to go for the higher-quality recordings possible at SP, or want to use special effects on pre-recorded tapes, you'll be happier with a four-head machine.

Three-head machines are in reality just a notch better than two-head machines: the third head is used to clean up the quality of the special-effects modes by offering noise-free "matched azimuth" field still pictures. Five-head machines are similar. They're just like three-head machines, but add two wider heads for better recording and playback at SP.

What about six- and seven-head machines? These are all VHS Hi-Fi models, and since the two extra heads are only for Hi-Fi audio, simply subtract them when comparing the machine to other decks on picture quality. What you're left with are conventional four- and five-head designs. Watch out for a few five-head VHS Hi-Fi decks—don't confuse them with regular non-Hi-Fi models that also come with five heads. A five-head Hi-Fi machine is really only a three-head deck and, except for the Hi-Fi aspect, will be outperformed at SP by the non-Hi-Fi five header.

THE SYSTEMS AT A GLANCE



from VHS format originator JVC back in 1979—the same HR-6700 referred to earlier. JVC added two extra heads to the video drum for a couple of reasons. In the first place, JVC designers wanted to widen the appeal of their VHS recorders by offering a machine that—like competing products from Panasonic, Hitachi, and RCA—recorded at a slower, more economical speed. Until the appearance of this machine, JVC had only built VHS decks and portables that recorded at the original two-hour standard speed. But JVC was not about to offer slow-speed recording unless it could devise a means of maintaining the quality of SP recordings. In addition, the designers wanted to outflank the competition by introducing a VCR that offered a range of impressive SFX like still frame and slow motion—all without any of the usual noise-bar distortions common to many other decks made around the same time.

JVC solved both problems by introducing the concept of four video heads—two pair, one for each recording speed. JVC engineered a video drum that had two heads designed exclusively for recording and playback at the original standard speed along with another set just for recording and playing back tapes made at the new slower speed, called “Extended Play” (EP), in which the tape creeps along at a speed that’s exactly one-third of SP.

But even before JVC set the standards for the new EP speed (which also goes by the name of Super Long Play—SLP), other manufacturers were making VHS decks that recorded at a Long Play (LP) speed that was exactly half the original SP speed. And all those other machines used only two video heads—which was, qualitatively speaking, part of the problem. As JVC’s engineers knew only too well, with videotape recording, picture quality is related to the width of the video heads employed. At

faster speeds there’s more space available on the tape for recording those 60 tracks made by the video heads every second. Reduce the tape speed to increase the recording time and the width of those heads has to become narrower. Which is what most of the other VHS manufacturers had done. The two heads in all their pre-1979 VCRs were really set or “optimized” for recording at the slower LP speed. Sure, you could record at the higher speed if you liked—but it would be with the same set of heads, resulting in only marginally better pictures.

But at the time, few consumers knew or cared about these subtleties. Quantity, not quality, was selling VCRs and most consumers shunned VHS equipment that couldn’t cram at least four hours onto a T-120 tape. JVC reasoned that using its innovative four-head technology, it could combine the advantages of quality recording along with extended-play recording. And it opened up the new dimension of special effects which makes the four-head design almost mandatory for the VHS format.

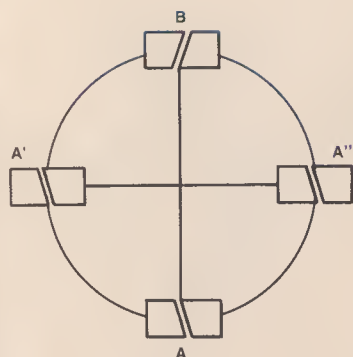
Why *mandatory*? When the consumer can select any of three recording speeds ranging from SP (3.335 cm/sec) down to EP (1.11 cm/sec), it becomes almost impossible for a single set of video heads to recover the recorded information from the tape in a way that can deliver clear still frames or slow motion. Recording those 60 diagonal lines onto the tape is one thing, but getting the video heads to retrace those tracks accurately to deliver SFX is another. The biggest difficulty is that when you stop or slow down the tape to get the desired effect, the angle of the rotating head changes in relation to the path of the signal already recorded on the tape. And wider video heads, more so than narrow video heads, have the ability to deal with these

problems more successfully since their extra width makes it easier for them to retrace all of the signal more completely.

Most four-head VHS VCRs therefore offer better-quality recording and playback (with or without special effects) because they assign two discrete sets of heads for the dual tasks of recording and playback at each of the machines’ most often used speeds—SP and EP. Since the advent of the EP speed, which appeared in 1979, the earlier LP speed that was popular between 1977 and 1979 has been getting less attention from VCR manufacturers. Some companies like JVC have never offered LP as a recording speed on their machines or on any of those machines they build for other companies (Sansui, Kenwood, Akai, Zenith, NEC, Jensen, Teac, Samsung, and a few others), even though for the past few years, they have offered the ability to at least play tapes recorded on other VCRs at LP.

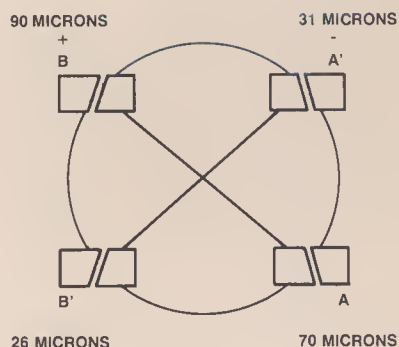
But these VCRs don’t offer any special effects at LP—not even visible picture search, which is about the easiest special effect to produce. Most other VHS manufacturers (such as Sharp and Mitsubishi) now offer the LP speed for recording though some of their original machines from a few years ago offered SP and EP. And of those companies offering LP recording, few offer any *quality* special-effects playback at that speed. A lot of the machines built by Hitachi, for example—whose main American brand-name customer is RCA—don’t offer any SFX at LP at all. Fortunately, that trend finally seems to be changing with some of the latest high-end machines from Hitachi, like the VT-89A (and RCA’s VKT-700 “Dimensia” VCR), now offering visible picture search and special effects at the middle speed. But as the instruction manuals tell you, for the best special-effects playback

Four-Head Matched Azimuth Design



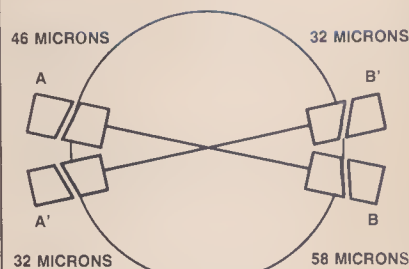
A,B-RECORD/PLAY
A', A''-SLOW, STILL PLAY

Four-Head JVC Non-Double Azimuth Design



A,B-SP RECORD/PLAY
A', B'-EP RECORD/PLAY

New JVC Double Azimuth Design



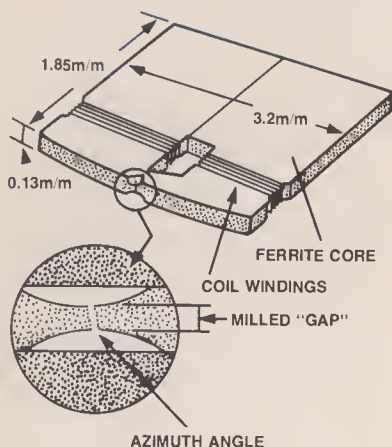
A,B-SP RECORD/PLAY
A',B'-EP RECORD/PLAY/SEARCH
A, B, A', B'- SP SEARCH
A,B'-STILL/SLOW
A',B-STILL/SLOW

it's recommended you use either SP or EP. (But we're getting ahead of ourselves—those Hitachi-built units have five heads and we're still on the four-headers.)

There are two more VHS variations on the four-headed theme. One of the most important is the "Tech-4" system introduced by Panasonic a few years ago. It has become standard on most middle and high-end VCRs sold by Panasonic and the many other companies which buy machines from Matsushita, Panasonic's Japanese parent company. That long list currently includes the VCRs sold by Quasar (also owned by Matsushita), Magnavox, Sylvania, Philco, GE, J.C. Penney, Curtis Mathes, Olympus, Canon, and Teknika.

At about the same time JVC was introducing its four-head VCRs in 1979-80, Matsushita was taking the wraps off some high-end four-headers of its own. But like

Typical Video Head Construction

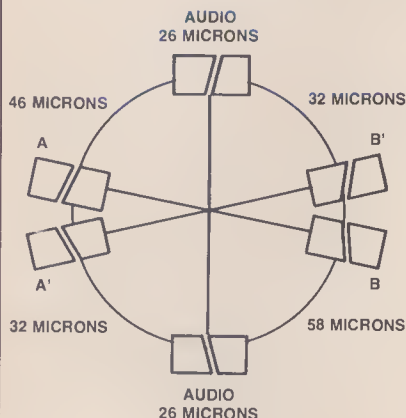


the JVC machines, Matsushita also relied on the "frame" method to reproduce special effects—resulting in jittery, jumpy still frames and slow-motion shots. And since the two heads used for recording and playing back tapes made at the fast SP speed were now much wider than the heads used on most of the earlier VCRs that didn't offer any special effects at all, occasional quality problems would appear when one of the new decks played back an older tape.

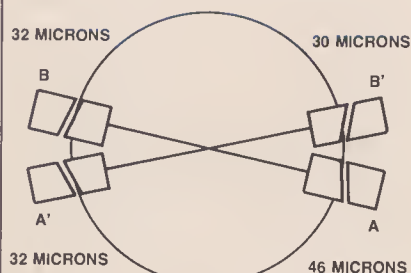
What kind of quality problems? Well, for one, the wider playback heads on the new machine would pick up more than just the narrower video tracks found on the tape made on the earlier machine. They would also pick up a lot of noise from the empty spaces left between the tracks, degrading picture quality. Second, when VCRs with visible picture search began to appear,

continued on page 127

JVC VHS Hi-Fi Design

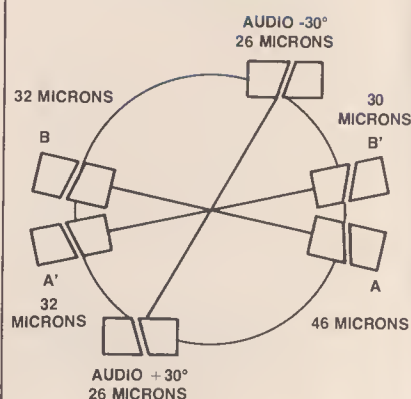


Matsushita Tech-4 Design

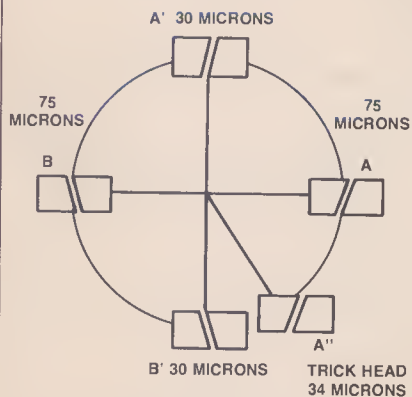


A,B-SP RECORD/PLAY
A',B'-SLP RECORD/PLAY/SEARCH
A,A'-SP NOISELESS STILL, SLOW
B,B'-SLP NOISELESS STILL, SLOW
A,B,A',B'-SP SEARCH

Matsushita Tech-4 Hi-Fi Design

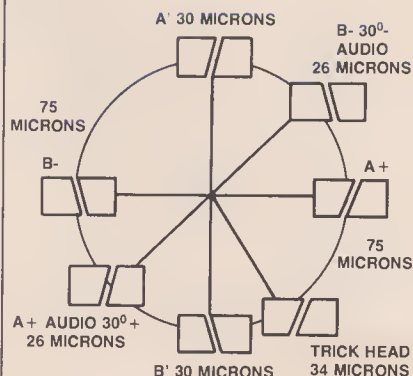


Hitachi Five-Head Design

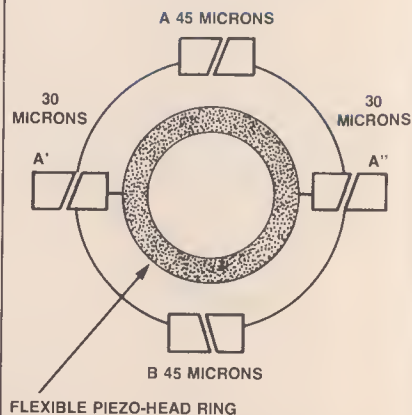


A,B-SP RECORD, PLAY
A',B'-EP RECORD, PLAY
A', A''-SP, EP TRICK PLAY

Hitachi 5 + 2 VHS Hi-Fi Design



Panasonic NV-8950 Piezo-Head Design



A,B-RECORD/PLAY
A',A''-SEARCH, STILL, SLOW

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GE 1CVM5080E 'Uni-Cam' 8mm Camcorder System

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If you've been reading our comments about camcorders, you'd think we couldn't be enthusiastic about one. Well, you're

wrong. The Sony CCD-V8 has changed our attitude with a large number of small advances in size, weight, performance, and convenience.

Though we knew Sony was selling 8mm overseas, we didn't actually see one until we were in Japan in March 1985—and didn't see one in the U.S. until Sony's announcement in May. On each of those occasions we were impressed by how close Sony had gotten to equaling standard half-inch VCR quality (SuperBeta not included). Our first opportunity to use a Sony 8mm unit for any extended period was at the beginning of May, and we're so impressed that we're not sure whether we're going to buy that or a SuperBeta first. On the screen, Sony's "Video 8" is outstanding; in your hands, it feels like it belongs there; and on top of your TV, it looks and operates like a tabletop VCR except for the handle bulge at the top and the adapter plug at the side. It comes with all the accessories you need for making your own tapes, and an accessory tuner/timer is available. Sony describes 8mm as the system of the future (though emphasizing that it will not give up the Beta format, "the videophile's system of choice"). This commitment to 8mm shows in the complete range of accessories announced at the same time. Spokesmen also point out that more than 127 manufacturers have agreed on 8mm standards, so you won't face a tough deci-



Photos by Les Morsillo

sion between competing 8mm formats.

No video system is likely to go far without an adequate supply of prerecorded programming. Kodak—first to deliver 8mm hardware—has announced that it expects to deliver a sizable number of prerecorded 8mm tapes later this year, though Kodak won't be first. A few X-rated tapes have been available since January. Two factors that have held up prerecorded production are a lack of duplicating machines and, until now, a lack of two-hour cassettes.

The CCD-V8 offers a number of attractive features like power-zoom lens with macro, electronic viewfinder, auto white balance, low-light sensitivity, backlight compensation, and internal or external microphone on the camera end. The VCR has a complete and separate control panel at the rear with such niceties as picture search, still frame, insert editing (both audio and video), and optional wired remote. Inside, flying erase heads allow precise

editing; AFM (audio frequency modulation) permits high-quality mono sound recording; and a new auto-tracking system insures high-quality pictures without adjustment as well as compatibility with tapes recorded on other machines.

No system is likely to be perfect on the first try. Yet we could find few features to add. Among them would be auto focus, and to a lesser degree date/timer/title capability on the camera end. On the recorder side we would wish for stereo sound, slow motion, speed play, and the slower LP speed allowed for in the format agreement—if high picture quality could be maintained. Some of these wishes, like stereo, are already in the works, and we're pretty sure some of the others will come later.

Description. The CCD-V8 is all-black with a few touches of color on legends and controls. Weighing 4 pounds, 5 ounces naked, it gets up to 5 pounds, 1 ounce with

Note: All the 8mm camcorders tested in this issue can deliver up to 300 lines of horizontal resolution—if the lighting levels are high enough. Sony's V8, for example, delivered close to 300 lines at 300 lux.

Do You Want Better Video? Hybrid-8 Has The POWER!

• **New Video Breakaway** Switches video to Camera 2, keeps audio from Camera 1. Film a singer with an audience. Switch video to an audience shot, without losing your singer's audio. A Hybrid exclusive!

• **Fade to Bk Fades** to soft gray (see 4, E).
• **Fade Duration** Regulates time of fade/out.

• **Switcher** Switches between A and B inputs.

• **X-CH Fade** (Cross Channel Fade) Gives clean switch/breaks.
• **Split/Screen** Great for tweaking the the Video Enhancer.

• **Special Effects Generator** Fantastic 16 patterns S.E.G.

• **Video Enhancer 3** controls: Enhance Sharpens apparent resolution up to 10%! Neg. Noise Amp Filters out video "snow". Color Balance Balances all colors.

• **New Dissolve Audio Mix** one video soundtrack into the next -like disc jockeys mix one record into the next.

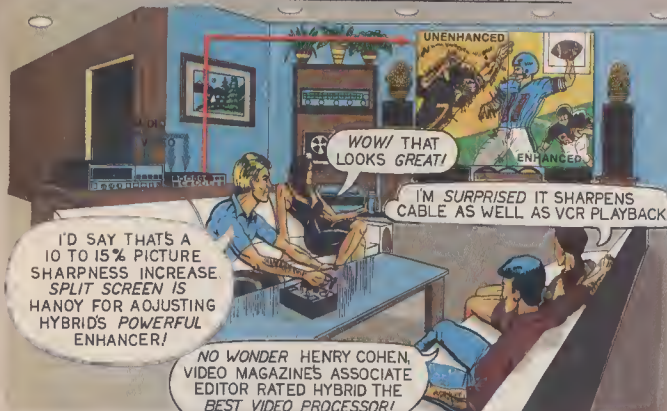
• **E/T Meter** Measures elapsed tape time exactly (see 4, F).

• **Stabilizer** Cancels copyguard.
• **Outputs 3** stereo, 3 video.

• **RF Output** direct to TV.



(1) Your VCR Playback Image Will Improve



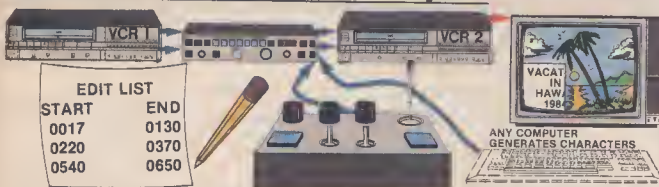
(2) Add 16 Exciting Special Effects Patterns Add fades/wipes to everything (to playback, recording, or live).



(3) Video Copies Made Professional Grade

Hybrid's 3 enhance controls make the quality difference.

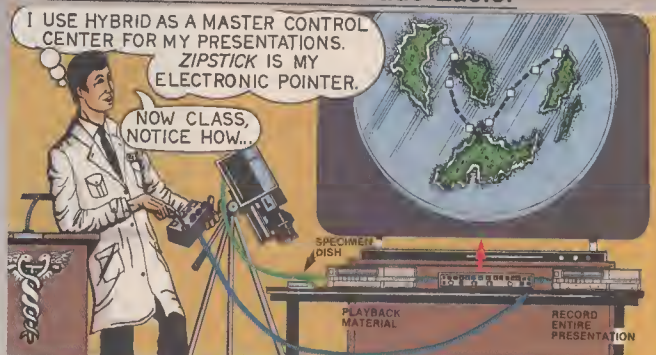
(4) Here's How You Edit, With Hybrid



Editing changes hours of tape (on VCR 1) to minutes of "Highlights" (on VCR 2). Hybrid Inserts fades/wipes at edit boundaries.

- Rewind both tapes. Zero both counters.
- Make an edit list. On VCR 1 note the counter reading at the start and end of each "Highlight".
- Roll VCR 1 to 0017 and put in play/pause.
- Put VCR 2 in record/pause. On Hybrid, press Fade/in
- Select a blue fade or wipe button on Hybrid (or a combination of buttons to build compound wipes.) Practice the effect by pressing Fade button in and out. Then fade out.
- Final steps: unpause 2, unpause 1, fade Hybrid in. E/T on.
- At 0130 fade Hybrid out, pause 2, pause 1, advance 1 to 0220.

(5) Live Presentations Are Made Easier



(6) Mix Your Voice Into Music Videos Or add your voice as a narrative, into any video tape — without losing the original soundtrack! Use Hybrid's fabulous Audio Dissolve feature.

(7) You Can Build A Two Camera Studio Only with Hybrid!



(8) Phone "Mr. Hook-Up" For any hook-up questions.

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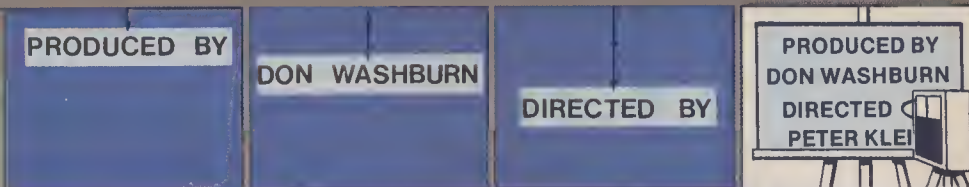
Zipstick Controller, Gives You 4 More Unique Special Effects (optional)

(1) Spotlighting It's a bright frame surrounded by black.
How it works: You manually converge wipes to form a spotlight, any shape. "Translucency" control reduces brightness of all areas outside the spotlight for proper contrast. Zipstick zips spotlight around the screen to highlight the person or object you desire.



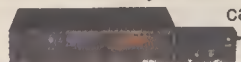
Use spotlighting to single out and highlight a person or object with a field of light.

(2) Scrolling It's a thin bright frame surrounded by black.
How it works: Your Zipstick scrolls frame down screen to expose your credits. Use with camera and easel.



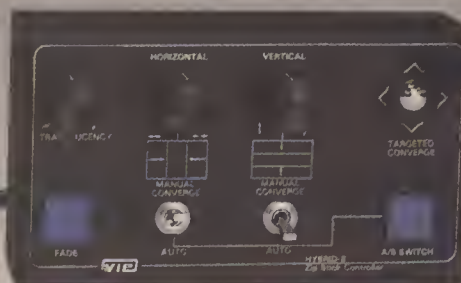
Scrolling is a good way to display credits. Use your camera and easel.

Mounts next to Hybrid or on 6' cable.



Translucency Controls brightness of all areas outside the spotlight, from very bright, to deep gray.

Fade Picture fades/in to a Spotlight or fades/out to soft gray.



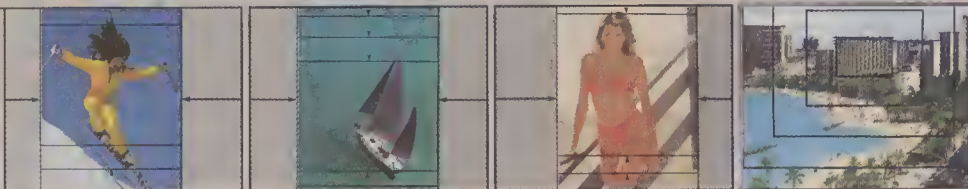
Zipstick Zips effects to any position on the screen.

Horizontal and Vertical Will manually converge wipes to shape spotlights.

Auto/Manual Switches select Auto/Manual operation of wipes.

A/B Switch Operates Hybrid A/B Switch.

(3) Targeted Converge Presto! A wipe box shrinks to any target you choose left or right of center screen.
How it works: Select a target center with Zipstick. V, on Manual. H, on Auto. Turn Translucency to black, as you press Fade.



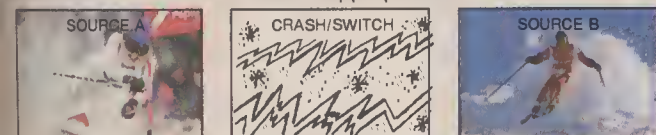
End your tape by converging to any dramatic event.

(4) Bouncing Ball Effect A tiny bright ball, an electronic pointer.
How it works: Zipstick zooms ball around screen as you point out details. Usually used with VCR in freeze frame or live with camera.

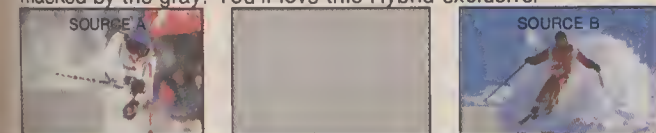


Use bouncing ball to point out a particular feature or detail. Especially good for fine details.

A/B Switch Methods Compared Most Video Processors have an A/B switch. And you switch source A to B by a method known as a "crash/switch" - an appropriate name!



Hybrid Gives You A Clean Switch Press X-CH fade - screen momentarily fades to a soft gray - then B fades/in. Glitch has been masked by the gray! You'll love this Hybrid exclusive.



Note To Our Customers:

You're The World's Most Important Person There were 17 competitors in 1980 when the Video Processor field was entered by a small company named V.I.P. Today there are 3 competitors. V.I.P.'s explosive growth can only be explained by 2 facts: Customers demand the best Video Processors. We supply the best Video Processors. Thank you for the privilege of serving you today - you're the world's most important person to us!

Mr. Hook-Up and the 100% Quality Crew at V.I.P.

History of VIP Products Awards Hybrid-8: Most Innovative Video Design, Design Engineering Council, Electronics Industry Assoc., 1984 • Best Consumer Video Switcher S.E.G., Video Review Magazine, June, 1984 • Best S.E.G. System, Video Magazine, 1983 • Best Video Processor Value, Video Magazine, 1982 • Most Technically Advanced Video Processor, Video Swapper Magazine, 1981 • **Vaudio System Manager + RF:** Most Innovative Switcher Design, Design Engineering Council, Electronics Industry Assoc., 1984

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Videotests

battery and cassette in place. We normally moan that camcorders put all their weight back up on your shoulder. With this model we didn't notice any discomfort, even carrying and using it for more than six hours. Its overall measurements are 7-5/8 inches high by 4-5/8 wide by 13-1/2 deep, but with its outrigger-style viewfinder at fullest extension it can be as wide as 10 inches. It is supplied with a plastic camera head cover, but even installing that does not increase depth, because the rubber lens cap collapses to let the cover get closer to the body of the camera. That cover is one of the primary protectors for the lens when you're carrying the camera, and it keeps the business end of the camera relatively dust-free if you park the VCR on a shelf or on the TV.

On the left side of the camera are most of the basic controls for camcorder operation. There you find an outdoor/indoor/automatic white balance switch, backlight/normal/lowlight sensitivity switch, recording-review button, and a camera power switch which turns on both the camera and recorder functions. On the other side of the camera is the handgrip with the run/stop button under your thumb and a rocker for the power zoom under the first two fingers of your right hand. Farther forward on the grip is a spring-loaded slide to release the battery that slides into the grip from the front. The remaining control is the focus ring on the lens, which also has a manual zoom ring with a button you must use to enter the macro focusing range. The microphone is just above the lens, and twisting its lock ring lets you remove the mic so you can plug an optional mic into the same jacks used by the standard mic. An optional directional mic is made specifically for the Video 8 system.

On the top is a carrying handle near the rear, and the electronic viewfinder (EVF). A button lets you adjust the EVF from side to side for convenient viewing, and a tilting mechanism lets you twist the viewing head so you may see inside from directly above, below, or at convenient points between. A slide on the viewing hood lets you focus the magnifier and you may flip the hood out of the way for viewing the one-inch CRT from a greater distance. Three LEDs in the finder area indicate low light, camera running, and white balance needed. In auto white-balance mode, just press the spring-loaded switch past the auto position until the indicator goes out.

The rear panel looks as if it belonged to a separate VCR. A display occupies the top center position and gives the counter number, memory engaged, tape status, and battery exhausted data. To its left are a power button which turns on the recorder and viewfinder—but not the camera—and the Eject button is below it. Directly below the display are buttons for counter Reset, Memory, and Insert edit; to the right of the display are the Record slide switch and the jack for the wired remote control (option-

al). In a row across the bottom are Rewind (Search), Play, Fast Forward (Search), Stop, and Pause, plus an earphone jack. At diagonally opposing corners are metal loops for a carrying strap. On the side that becomes the bottom during shooting, or the right side when the camcorder is pretending to be a VCR, is a multipin connector that connects to the tuner/timer or other accessories. It gives you access to power, input, and output lines. A slide cover protects this plug when it is not in use, and closer to the lens on the same side is the threaded tripod hole.

Supplied with the Video 8 are a battery, AC adapter, a device that lets you charge up to three batteries with the AC adapter, an adapter for the multipin plug (so you have access to audio and video lines—it also provides RF output), a carrying strap, a cassette, and antenna cables, transformers, and source switch.

Operation. After you charge the battery and put it into its compartment, you must turn on the V8 with either of the Power buttons before you can insert a tape. If you're going to use the camera function, use the Power switch in that group—then all the camera controls are operative and the VCR controls inopera-

tive. Using the VCR Power switch does the opposite, to prevent accidental operation of the wrong controls. If you're shooting, set the white balance, sensitivity (backlight, etc.) switch, and focus; frame the picture with the zoom lens; and push the Run button. As with all zoom lenses, if you focus in the tele position, the picture remains in focus for the entire zoom range unless the subject-to-camera distance changes. The Review button lets you see the last few seconds of the previous take for picture confirmation and editing. It's that simple. Battery life is an hour-plus and charge time is about an hour.

For playback through the viewfinder use the VCR Power button and operate the controls as you would any other VCR. The controls are now so common that they need no explanation. If you want to record or play line-level signals, or play back through a TV, you must insert the adapter that converts the multipin plug to standard connectors. We did not have any of the optional accessories for testing, but the Editing Controller sounds like a must for serious videophiles, and most people will elect to get the tuner/timer with its four-program/three-week timer for off-air recording. You'll probably be able to get by

Test Report:

Sony CCD-V8 Video 8 Camcorder DATA

Date of test: May 1985
Suggested retail price: \$1695
Weight: 4 pounds, 5 ounces; 5 pounds, 1 ounce with battery and cassette
Dimensions: 7-5/8 x 4-5/8 x 13-1/2 inches (h/w/d)
Power requirements: 8.5 VDC, 6.9W
Image sensor: CCD
Lens: f1.4, 6X (11.5-70mm) power zoom with macro
Filter diameter: 46mm
Minimum illumination: 19 lux
Auto focus: no
White balance: indoor/outdoor/automatic, switchable
Iris: automatic, with backlight/normal/highlight switch
Sensitivity: fixed
Viewfinder: electronic, with 1-inch CRT and discrete LED indicators for low light (yellow), white balance (orange), run/pause/low battery (red)
Viewfinder controls: magnifier focus
Auto fade: no
VCR controls: run/pause and quick review on front camera section; all others on rear panel
Microphone: back electret-condenser-type, detachable; provision for (optional) external mic
Tape format: 8mm
Tape speeds: SP, 1.43 mm/sec
Play speed select: not applicable
Still frame: yes
Frame advance: no
Slow motion: no
Speed play: no
Rapid search: see Cue & review
Cue & review: yes
Visible FF and Rew: no

Fast forward/rewind time: 3 minutes for P6-90 approx.

Remote pause: yes, with optional remote control

Remote: wired, optional (not tested)

Separate eject: yes

Counter digits: 4

Counter memory: yes

Program start locator/index/cue: with optional accessory Editing Controller, RM-E100

Audio dub: no, editing AFM tracks not possible without altering video

Video dub: yes, replaces audio too (see text on flying erase heads)

Auto rewind: no

Stereo: no

Hi-Fi: see text

Tuning method: tuner is an optional accessory (not tested)

Cable readiness: 181 channels

AFT: yes

Channel lock: yes

Timer: 4 event, 14 day

Auto channel-change: yes

RESULTS & RATINGS

Horizontal resolution: 230-240 lines

S/N, video luminance: 38dB, unweighted; 47.3dB, weighted and filtered (see text)

S/N, chroma AM: 40.3dB

S/N, chroma PM: 36dB

Audio frequency response: 31.5-14,000Hz, +0.3/-3dB; 20-20,000Hz, +0.3/-7.4dB (see text)

S/N, audio: better than 64dB

Audio distortion: less than 0.6 percent

Overall picture quality: excellent (see text)

Audio quality: excellent (see text)

Ease of operation: excellent

Overall performance: excellent (see qualifiers in text)

VAUDIO SYSTEM MANAGER — INTEGRATES ALL COMPONENTS

Clear One clears one switchpoint. **Clear All** clears all switchpoints. **A and V Breakaway** switch audio and video independently (great for simulcasts). **Director** instantly converts VSM for studio use.

Tiny red LEDs light switchpoints.

To Operate This Switcher: Press a **FROM** button (10 blue buttons along the top). Then press a **TO** button (8 blue buttons down the side).

FROM buttons - 10 program sources
7 A, V sources 3 RF sources

Learn Illegal Switch prevents feedback (i.e., from VCR1 to VCR1). **Security Scan** sequentially switches up to 10 home security cameras. **Scan Rate** adjusts scan time. **RF 3-4** selects channel on VSM's two RF modulators

TO buttons are 8 destinations

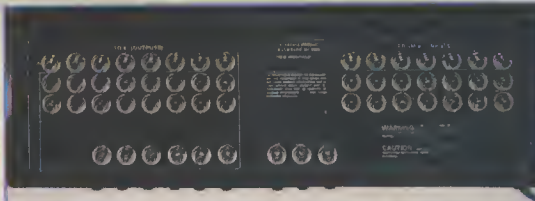
Button labels changeable

Vaudio System Manager + RF

MATRIX SWITCHER COMBINES ALL AUDIO, VIDEO, RF AND MUSIC COMPONENTS INTO ONE MASTER SYSTEM



Special Mode Buttons: Memory Cells 1-4 instantly recall up to four specific hook-ups. **Memory Learn** stores your special hook-ups in memory. **Lights** adjust LED brightness. **New Lock Code** you change three digit code if learned by unauthorized persons. **Unlock, Lock** prevents tampering.



Back Panel View Shows 3 Matrix

Video Matrix 7 input, 8 output

Stereo Matrix 7 input, 8 output

RF Matrix 3 input, 6 output

Total: 10 in 8 out + 2 RF Mods

Figure 1: Build A Four Camera Studio Use VSM as a routing switcher, and Hybrid-8 as an S.E.G. Get great results.

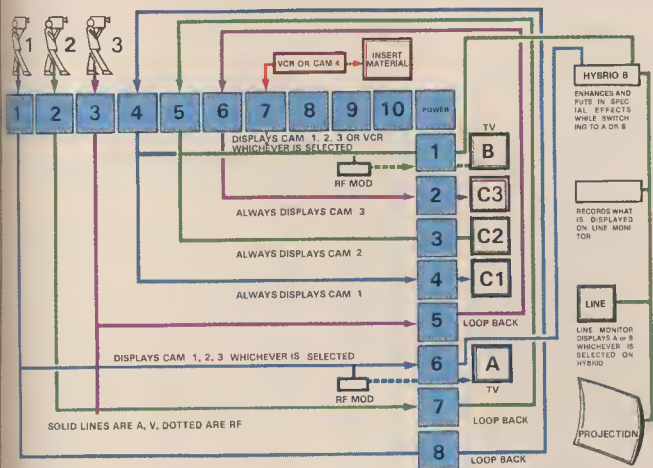


Figure 2: Same as 1, but shows a production in progress.

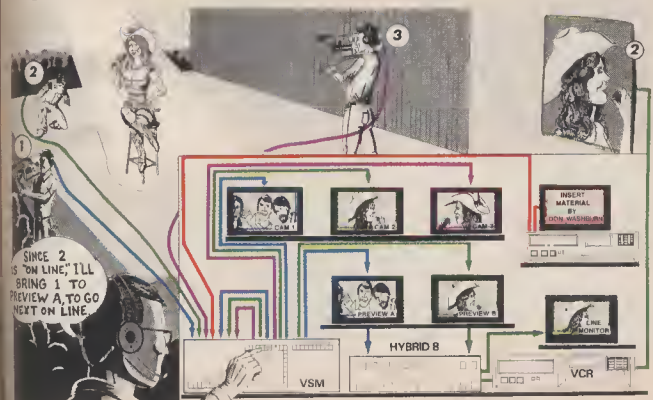
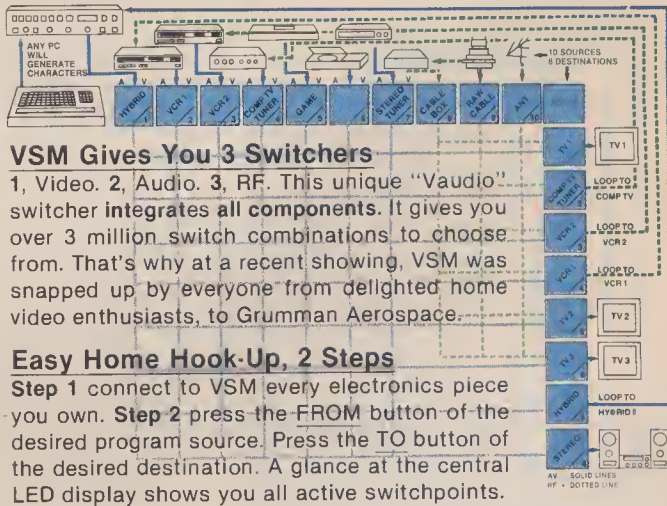


Figure 3: A Super, Home Set-Up Over 3 million switch combinations. Integrates all A, V and RF components.



VSM Gives You 3 Switchers

1, Video. 2, Audio. 3, RF. This unique "Vaudio" switcher integrates all components. It gives you over 3 million switch combinations to choose from. That's why at a recent showing, VSM was snapped up by everyone from delighted home video enthusiasts, to Grumman Aerospace.

Easy Home Hook-Up, 2 Steps

Step 1 connect to VSM every electronics piece you own. **Step 2** press the FROM button of the desired program source. Press the TO button of the desired destination. A glance at the central LED display shows you all active switchpoints.

Easy For Non-Technical Persons FROM/TO operation is so straight-forward, everyone gets immediate benefit from VSM.

Easy Studio Should you wish, VSM beautifully couples with Hybrid-8 to yield a Four Camera Studio, as illustrated.

You Can Try VSM Free Order VSM today on a 7-day free trial basis. If not 100% delighted, return (in original packing) for a full refund minus handling and shipping. Phone Donna, Lisa, Lori, Pat or Robin for info or order. **PRICE: \$797., Shipping \$4.**

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Videotests

without reading the manual, but as usual with Sony manuals, this one has so much useful information and so many shooting tips that we recommend you read it. You won't be sorry.

One of the things that made us camcorder converts is this unit's ease of handling. All its functions are easy to use and the controls are exactly where they'd be most handy when you want to use them. Having two Power switches that lock out the unwanted functions is so logical that we wonder why no one thought of it before. Using the V8 is pure pleasure, and even though there are a moderate number of controls, the isolation of their use gives this unit the simplicity of an Instamatic. Note: the Polaroid 8mm camcorder ("Videotests," February 1985) actually has fewer controls—but it also has limited functions. The Sony Video 8 provides the best of both worlds.

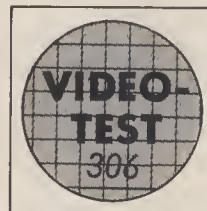
Performance. If the CCD-V8 didn't have such a good picture, it would be easy to dismiss it as one of those 8mm miniature camcorders. However, its picture quality is almost as good as half-inch. Horizontal resolution is close to 240 lines. Video S/N was 38dB, unweighted; and as high as 47.3dB, weighted and filtered. We normally stress the unweighted figure but the on-screen image suggests that the weighted figure more closely reflects the performance of this VCR. Much of the noise measured was between 100Hz and 1kHz—an area that seems to have little effect on viewing enjoyment. Chroma AM noise was 40.3dB and Chroma PM noise 36dB—not particularly impressive, but the color output signal which we normally don't talk about much was close to the highest we've measured on a consumer VCR. The result is good, rich, accurate color with little discernible effect from color noise. We rate it *excellent* even though we've seen slightly better resolution from standard half-inch VCRs.

Audio frequency response was flat from 31.5Hz to 14kHz within 3dB and covered the entire audible spectrum at +0.35/-7.4dB. That exceeds all VCR measurements except on half-inch Hi-Fi VCRs, which also use an AFM system with the audio laid down by rotating heads (in stereo, however). Sony provides no specification for audio frequency response, but the literature of other 8mm manufacturers suggests that 15kHz was the upper limit for 8mm frequency response. This machine disproves that limit. There are no other published audio specs, but we measured audio S/N at 64dB-plus and total harmonic distortion (THD) at less than 0.6 percent. Such audio performance is outstanding by any VCR standards except Hi-Fi.

Conclusion. This VCR has made believers out of us. Though not much smaller and lighter than the competition, it's compact and light. We took it to Washington,

D.C. and toted it around for six hours through a museum and a five-mile hike from Georgetown to the Capitol by a roundabout route—all without any discomfort. Now that we've seen the pictures at home, we're not sorry that we chose the CCD-V8 instead of a half-inch VCR plus camera. It's certainly worth a good long look.

GE 8mm Camcorder System



The GE Uni-Cam 8mm Video System was actually announced in January 1984, the day before Kodak made its announcement, but GE's introduction was delayed and that unit is only now becoming available.

It is made by the Matsushita Electric Industrial Company of Japan, the same firm (or part of it) that produces the Kodak machine. It should therefore be no surprise that they look and act quite similar. In fact, apart from color, the only external differences we could find were in the handgrip and the VCR control buttons. The Kodak version has a permanently mounted handgrip while the GE version has an adjustable one with a slight rearrangement of the same controls. The GE machine also offers soft-touch button controls for the VCR instead of the membrane keypad on the competing version. We like GE's choices better, but both machines are functionally the same.

GE's Uni-Cam System consists of the 1CVM5080E camcorder, supplied with battery, cassette, battery charger, audio/video cable, earphone, carrying strap, and storage case plus optional accessories. Most desirable among the accessories is the 1CVT650 two-program two week tuner/timer, supplied with a wired remote control, antenna cables, and transformers. It lets you connect the camcorder to a TV. Other optional accessories include the 1CVA420 AC power supply and antenna adapter, which also lets you view the picture on a TV set (\$225); an 18-foot extension cord to connect the camcorder to either of the above accessories (1CVA340, \$65); and 90-minute cassettes (\$18). All these are available directly from GE by mail order, so if there is no 8mm dealer in your area, you can find what you need. Good work, GE.

The camcorder offers all the basic functions of a camera and recorder in one unit and a number of bells and whistles. The camera portion boasts auto focus, auto fade, auto white balance, electronic viewfinder, dating function, and 6X power zoom with macro capability. The recorder sec-

Do you hear bullets ricocheting across your living room, or turbulent waterfalls crashing down the stairs when you watch TV?

If you hear dump trucks roaring across your living room, cannons exploding all around you, and rain drops splattering the floor when you watch TV, then you probably already have a Teledapter. However, if you don't, read on.

If you have a TV and a stereo system you can enjoy the excitement you've been missing...now! The Teledapter's unique electronics will combine your TV and stereo into a powerful entertainment center that would easily cost thousands of dollars.

Imagine having the best front row seats in town for ball games, musicals, and movies.

Teledapter works with any TV, VCR, or satellite receiver, regardless of age or model, and conveniently plugs into the auxiliary, tape, or tuner input on any stereo amplifier or receiver system.

All TV, satellite, cable, and VCR programs will have the same powerful sound as your stereo system and speakers.

FEATURES

Stereo-Plex™ Circuitry is for all those mono TV's and VCR's. It transforms their mono sound into sparkling two-channel stereo effects. Got a stereo TV or VCR? No problem. Just plug them in. Since most TV and cable programming is mono, the Stereo-Plex circuitry will pick up where your stereo TV or VCR stops short.

Mono sounds, even when played through two speakers, appear to come from one direction (the center).

Stereo sounds come from two directions.

The stereo/mono test is really simple; plug the Teledapter up, push the mono-stereo button on

your stereo. When you go from mono to stereo, listen to the sounds spread out across the room. Perform the test without a Teledapter and a mono signal will remain in the center.

Ambiance and Spatial Circuits expand a stereo signal to greater separation than it normally has.

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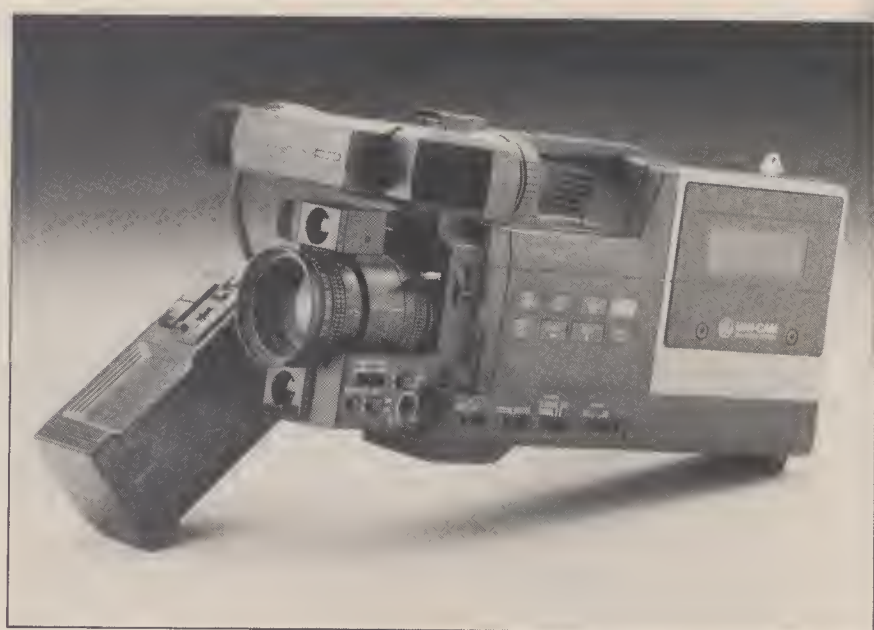
Videotests

tion offers the basic functions plus still frame, frame advance, and 5X bidirectional scan. Altogether they add up to all of the pleasure of making your own movies—strike that word; *tapes*—while offering the instant gratification of immediate playback, all in a 5-1/2-pound package.

Description. The camcorder looks like a flight of steps from the side. At the rear is the largest box, with the cassette hatch and tape transport. In front of that is a slightly lower box with the tape-transport controls, and farther forward is a still lower section with the lens and camera controls. Mounted above the middle step is the carrying handle and viewfinder support bracket. The various sections blend gracefully, but as a package the unit feels somewhat chunky. It is mostly black with a few touches of grey and measures 6-1/2 inches tall by 9-1/2 wide by 15 deep, including all the projections. However, the main part of the unit is only 3-1/4 inches wide.

Most of the controls are located on the left side of the camcorder when it is in shooting position. The ones that stand out most are the tape-transport controls near the middle. There, arranged in two neat rows, are the Rewind (Scan), Play, Fast Forward (Scan), and Record buttons above Pause/Still, Frame Advance, Stop, and Eject. The Record button is red. Below these along the bottom edge are slide switches for white balance Preset/Auto, Standby/Operate with an LED indicator, Record (camera)/Play (camera)/VCR, and power On/Off. On a stepped surface in line with the lens is the Indoor/Outdoor switch. Most of the remaining controls on this side are on a projection below the lens.

The controls below the lens are the focus Auto/Manual switch, buttons for Negative/Positive image, Fade on/off, Backlight compensation, and the rotary Red/Blue tint control. The projection houses the lower sensor for the auto-focus




mechanism, and the upper sensor projects like a periscope from the top of the lens. On the lens are the manual focus and zoom rings, and at the tip of the lever on the zoom ring is the release button to let you enter the macro focusing range.

On the pistolgrip projecting from the other side are the rocker for the power zoom, a slide switch for Dater/Off/Counter, and buttons to set the date, counter, and counter memory. The two buttons do double duty depending on switch position. To rotate the handle into shooting position, slide a catch on the underside; there are four usable positions. We prefer it pointing straight forward—in this position we could operate the Run/Pause button most easily. Next to that is a thumbrest. The Review button is conveniently located on the other side where you won't press it by mistake. A security strap goes around the back of your wrist as on most cameras and

camcorders, and buried inside the grip is the battery. Access to the battery compartment is through the bottom of the grip, and in the compartment is a screwdriver adjustment for vertical lock. A long skinny screwdriver is provided. On the body of the camera are mini phone jacks for microphone and earphone plus an 18-pin jack for connection to accessories.

Mounted over the lens is the electronic viewfinder (EVF) with a half-inch CRT; indicators here refer to iris, run, battery/dew, outdoor, and fade. The EVF has a permanently mounted, focusable magnifier control for brightness and focus (best left alone), a wide range of swings and tilts for convenient viewing and storage, a tally light, and the permanently mounted mic. The viewfinder is detachable as a unit.

The tuner/timer is a simple stepped box. On its front is the ubiquitous clock/timer display just left of the center. Farther left is



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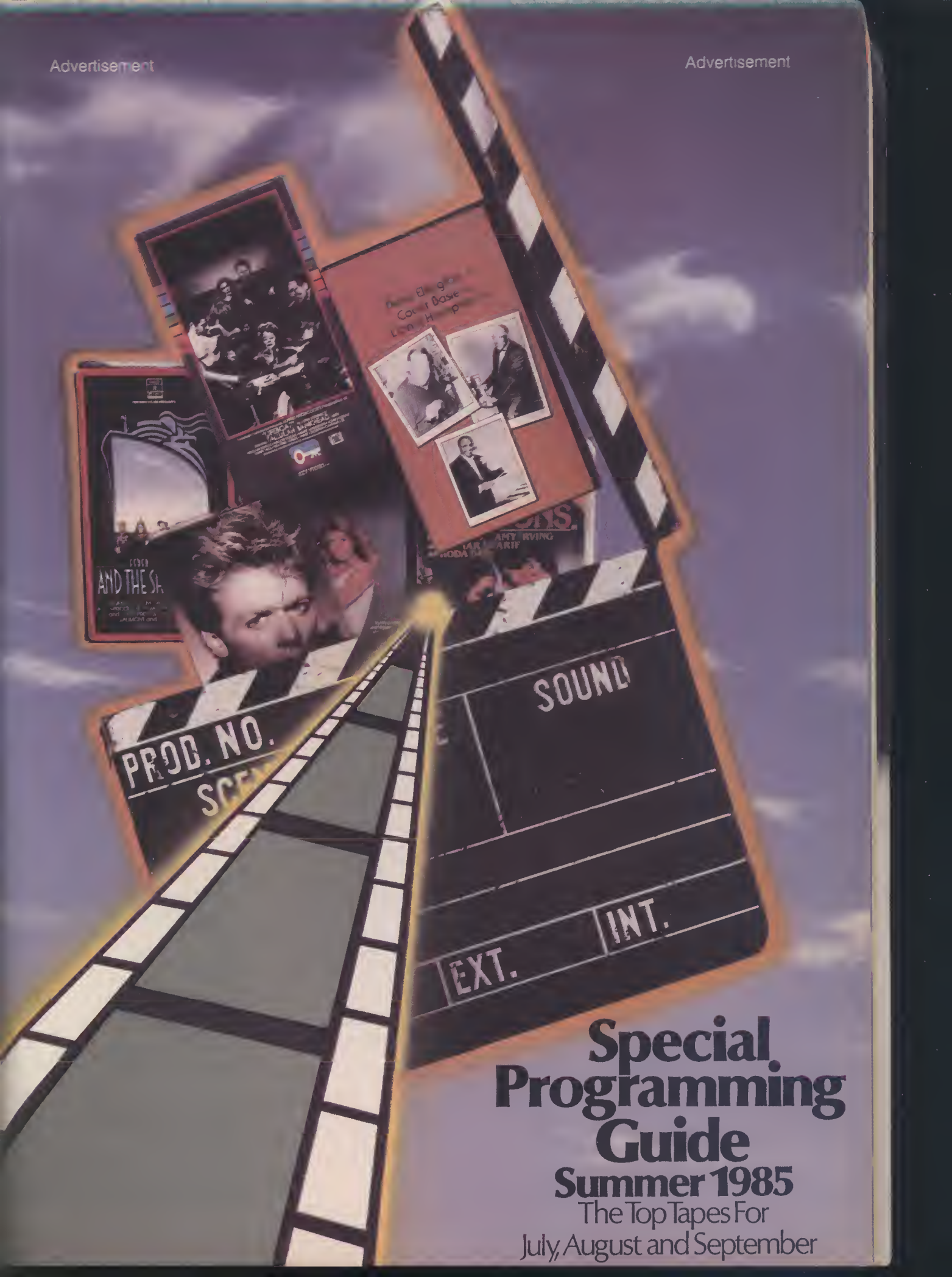
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Special Programming Guide

Summer 1985

The Top Tapes For
July, August and September

Daryl Hall & John Oates

The Daryl Hall & John OatesTM Video Collection: 7 Big Ones



July

A romance, a comedy, or a thriller? Which newly released tapes should I buy over the next three months?

As more and more companies release prerecorded videotapes, it's getting even harder to keep up with the hundreds of films to choose from. In this special advertising supplement, we've put together a listing of the top tapes that will be on sale in your local video store during July, August, and September. Want to know if your favorite films will be on sale during those months, you'll only find it here. But the companies ask us to remind you that occasionally they will not be able to get all the tapes to their dealers at specified times. These instances are rare, however. We're sure you'll find this supplement a handy guide to your future viewing pleasure.

All films are color and available in VHS or Beta format except where otherwise noted. Those specifically recorded in Hi-Fi Stereo are also highlighted. The listings are broken down by month and in alphabetical order (not by time of their release). All films range from G to PG with R ratings and unsuitable for children the only warnings given. All prices are suggested retail and the (t) signifies a manufacturer's tentative pricing.

Action in Arabia—1944. B&W. 72 min. \$24.95. From RKO HomeVideo.
The Adventures of Droopy. 53 min. \$29.95. From MGM/UA HomeVideo.

Seven classic cartoons featuring Droopy. All made between 1943-'55.
After The Fall Of New York—1985. Rated R. 95 min. From Vestron Video.

A futuristic thriller of life on Earth after the world's third nuclear war. The sole survivors are caught in a desperate battle to live.

Alamo And The Condor—1984. Subtitled. Rated R. 89 min. \$59.95. Beta Hi-Fi only. From RCA-Columbia Pictures Home Video.

Alen Esquivel plays a young boy who dreams to soar like a condor. Attempting to fly he crashes and becomes a cripple, wandering the countryside, a witness to the brutality of war.

American Caesar, Vols 1-2. 145, 97 min. \$39.95 each. From Embassy Home Entertainment.

John Huston narrates this documentary of Gen. Douglas MacArthur's amazing life. First volume goes through 1945, the second up to his death.

American Dreamer—1984. 105 min. \$79.98. From CBS/Fox Video.

Jobeth Williams stars as an ordinary woman who gets caught in a whirlwind adventure when visiting Paris. Tom Conti co-stars.

Andre The Giant. Approx. 60 min. \$59.95. From Coliseum Video.

The wrestling giant's top matches with Ken Peters, Gorilla Monsoon, and many others.

Arnold—1973. 96 min. From Lightning Video.

Stelle Stevens and Roddy McDowall star in this mystery-comedy about a corpse named Arnold suspected of foul play! Also stars Elsa Lanchester and Ferley Grenger.

Asterix And Cleopatra. 72 min. \$49.95. From Walt Disney Home Video.

Animated tale starring French hero Asterix and pals Obelix and

Getefix pitted against Queen Cleopatra in ancient Egypt.

B.C. Rock—1984. 82 min. Rated R. From Vestron Video.

The story of evolution is brought to life via animation featuring rock n' roll songs from Hell & Oates, Genesis, Rick Wakeman, and more.

Bell Of Fire—1941. B&W. 111 min. \$69.95. From Embassy Home Entertainment.

Gary Cooper is a serious professor who gets tangled up with night club queen Barbara Stanwyck. Howard Hawks directed this comedy classic. Part of the Goldwyn Gold series.



Beach Party—1963. 98 min. \$59.95. From Warner Home Video.

Behind The Rialing Sun—1943. B&W. 89 min. \$24.95. From RKO Home Video.

The Beet Of The WWF, Vol. II. Approx. 60 min. \$59.95. From Coliseum Video.

Pro wrestling matches featuring Morales vs. Muraco, Atlas and Mr. Fuji, the Moondogs, and more.

Big Wednesday—1978. 120 min. Hi-Fi. \$59.95. From Warner Home Video.

Biohazard—1985. Rated R. 84 min. \$39.95. From Continental Video.

Psychic experiments accidentally unleash a toxic, man-eating monster. Stars Aldo Ray and Angelique Pettyjohn.

Blaae The Beets And Children—1973. Rated R. 190 min. \$59.95. Beta Hi-Fi only. From RCA-Columbia Pictures Home Video.

Troubled teenagers protest against an inhumane society in this powerful and moving drama from director Stanley Kramer.

Bob The Quail. 60 min. \$29.95. Hi-Fi. From Family Home Entertainment.

Animated fun for the kids.

Bocue e le Certa. 30 min. each. \$9.95 apiece. From Kartes Video Communications.

Bombadier—1943. B&W. 99 min. \$24.95. From RKO Home Video.

Boom In The Moon—1945. B&W. 83 min. \$39.95. Hi-Fi. From U.S.A. Home Video.

Buster Keaton plays an American GI at the end of WW II adrift in a raft who thinks he's landed in Japan. It's really Mexico and that's when the fun begins.

The Brain—1965. B&W. 83 min. \$39.95. Hi-Fi. From Monterey Home Video.

A scientist tries to keep a dead man's brain alive and finds himself being controlled by it. Stars Peter van Eyck, Bernard Lee. Part of Midnight Madness series.

Bubbe Until It Hurts. 88 min. \$39.95. From Continental Video.

A total body workout for all fitness levels introduces motion resistance isometrics and stars the well-known ex-football player.

Cere Beers Movie—1985. 75 min. From Vestron Video.

The cute animated creatures in their first full-length feature film. They travel the world spreading love and hugs to everyone; great for kids.

The Case Of Miss McMichael—1978. 99 min. \$59.98. From CBS/Fox Video.

Glenda Jackson and Oliver Reed star in this film of a teacher attempting to deal with an unruly class.

Claae Reunion Massacre—1977. Rated R. 84 min. \$39.95. From Continental Video.

A 10-year high school reunion turns into a horrifying massacre when a maniac graphically murders his classmates.

The Clinic—1982. 92 min. \$69.95. From VidAmerica.

Count Yorga, Vampire—1970. 91 min. \$69.95. From Thorn EMI/HBO Video.

Country Music Clessice. 30 min. each. \$9.95 apiece. From Kartes Video Communications.

Country Music With The Muppets. 112 min. \$59.98. From Playhouse Video.

The Muppets go country.

The Cruedare Live: Midnight Triangle—1984. 52 min. Hi-Fi. \$29.95. From MCA Home Video.

Curse Of The Black Widow—1976. 97 min. \$39.95. From Continental Video.

A series of brutal murders leads to a web of supernatural terror as a giant spider attacks L.A. Stars Tony Franciosa, Donna Mills, Vic Morrow, and Patty Duke Austin.

Derk Forcas—1982. 96 min. \$59.95. From Media Home Entertainment.

Desperate Women—1978. 98 min. \$59.95. Hi-Fi. From U.S.A. Home Video.

Susan Saint James, Ronnee Blakely and Ann Dusenberry play three prisoners attempting to escape in the desert. Dan Haggerty helps **Devil's Playground and Sinleter Journey**. 59 min. each. \$39.95 apiece. From Buena Vista Home Video.

Western adventures starring Hopalong Cassidy and his sidekicks California Carlson and Lucky Jenkins. Part of Western Theater line.

Dlory Of A Young Comic. 67 min. \$39.95. From Pacific Arts Video Records.

Doctor In Distress—1963. 98 min. \$59.95. From VidAmerica.

Dodsworth—1936. B&W. 101 min. \$69.95. From Embassy Home Entertainment.

Walter Huston stars in this classic film drama based on the Sinclair Lewis novel. Co-stars are Ruth Chatterton, Mary Astor, Paul Lukas, and David Niven. Part of the Goldwyn Gold series.

The Devil's Triangle—1978. 59 min. \$59.95. From MGM/UA Home Video.

Vincent Price narretes this in-depth documentary of the strange disappearances in The Bermuda Triangle.

Echoes—1983. Rated R. 90 min. \$39.95. From VidAmerica.

80 Blocke From Tiffany's. 72 min. \$39.95. From Pacific Arts Video Records. Explicit language—not recommended for children.

Elmer—1976. 82 min. From Lightning Video.

A big hound dog gets lost in the wilderness and meets a young boy who is temporarily blind. Together they must find their way back to civilization. Fine family fare.

The Eye Of The Ameryllis—1982. 94 min. From Vestron Video.

A young girl is swept up in a mad game between her grandmother, a ghostly presence and the deep sea. Stars Ruth Ford, Marsha Byrne and Guy Boyd.

Falcon And The Snowmen—1985. Rated R. 131 min. From Vestron Video.

Timothy Hutton and Sean Penn star in this true-to-life espionage thriller as men who sell national secrets to the Russians. Directed by Jon Schlesinger.

Fendengo—1985. 91 min. \$79.95. Hi-Fi. From Warner Home Video.

Fannie. 60 min. \$39.95. From Best Film & Video Corp.

Feet Welking—1982. Rated R. \$59.98. From Key Video.

James Woods and Kay Lenz star in this sizzling tale of a prison guard who longs to leave his job and move to the Pacific Northwest.

The First Turn On—1983. Rated R and unedited versions. 84 or 88 min. From Lightning Video.

Four teenage campers and their camp counselor get trapped in a cave by an avalanche. Knowing they will never get out they let their inhibitions go. Stars Sheila Kennedy, famed covergirl.

First Yank In Tokyo—1945. B&W. 82 min. \$24.95. From RKO Home Video.

Gidget—1959. 95 min. \$59.95. Beta Hi-Fi only. From RCA-Columbia Pictures Home Video.

The original teenage beach movie stars Sandra Dee in the title role. Also features James Darrin as Moondoggle and Cliff Robertson playing surf-bum Kahoona, both in love with Gidget.

Gigglenort Hotel, Vole. 2 and 3. 45 min. each. \$39.95 apiece. From Karl-Lorimar Home Video.

Entertainment for kids.

Gonzo Presents: Muppets' Weird Stuff. 55 min. \$59.98. From Playhouse Video.

Humorous adventures with America's favorite puppet.

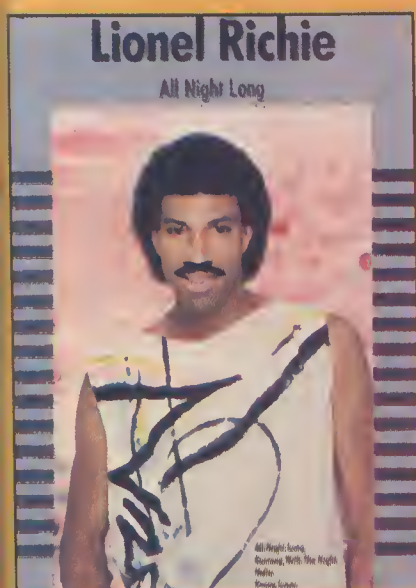
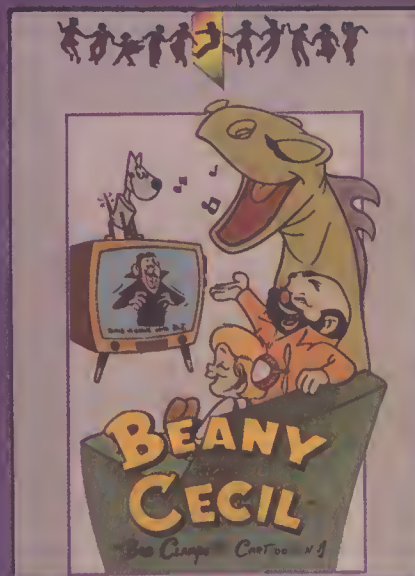
The Green Pastures—1936. 90 min. \$59.98. From Key Video.

Rex Ingram plays "The Lord" in this fantasy set in heaven played by an all-star, all-black cast.

The Herd Wey—1979. 88 min. \$59.95. From Trens World Entertainment.

Hiatory la Made At Night—1937. B&W. 98 min. From Lightning Video.

Charles Boyer and Jean Arthur star in this mystery classic. Arthur plays a woman who leaves her husband and Boyer vows to help her at any cost.





Hooker—1983. Parental discretion advised. 79 min. From Vestron Video.

A documentary offering a rare and personal glimpse of prostitutes during their public times and private moments. Directed by Robert Nemack. **How To Pick Up Man**. 60 min. \$19.95. From Kartes Video Communications.

Hunter—1976. 60 min. \$59.95. From Karl-Lorimar Home Video.

James Franciscus stars as a lawyer who is framed and sent to prison for eight years. Upon his release he seeks revenge. Co-stars Linda Evans, Ned Beatty, and Broderick Crawford.

Hunter Of The Golden Cobra—1982. Rated R. 95 min. From Vestron Video.

In the final days of WW II, two U.S. Rangers plot to recover a prized golden cobra. The chase begins as a Japanese General escapes with the priceless relic.

I Like To Hurt People. 80 min. \$59.95. From New World Video.

Compilation of ruthless pro wrestling action featuring The Shiek versus a who's who of mat stars including Andre the Giant, Abdullah the Butcher, Dory Funk, and Dusty Rhodes.

The Inheritors—1984. Dubbed or subtitled. 89 min. \$59.95. From Embassy Home Entertainment.

Director Walter Bannert captured the rising problems of fascist groups in Europe who prey on the young and make them the inheritors of bigotry, hatred, and violence.

Into The Night—1985. Rated R. 115 min. \$79.95. From MCA Home Video.

Invitation To A Wedding—1983. 89 min. From Vestron Video.

Sir John Gielgud and Sir Ralph Richardson star in this comedy. The bridegroom's best friend falls in love with the bride and does his best to disrupt the wedding.

The July Group—1982. 76 min. \$59.95. From Trans World Entertainment.

Likely Stories, Vol. II. B&W and color. 59 min. \$19.95. Hi-Fi. From U.S.A. Home Video.

Danny DeVito is a New Jersey politician molding his campaign around his media blitz. Co-stars Debralee Scott, Patrick Macnee.

Limited Gold Edition II Cartoon Classics. Approx. 60 min. \$29.95 each. From Walt Disney Home Video.

Seven volumes of never-before-released Disney cartoons, each with 5 to 7 cartoons. Titles are: *Life With Mickey*, *Donald's Bee Pictures*, *From Pluto With Love*, *An Officer And A Duck*, *The World According To Goofy*, *The Disney Dream Factory*: 1933-38, and *How The Best Was Won*: 1933-60. Each has a specially produced introduction.

Love And Bullets—1979. 103 min. \$59.98. Hi-Fi. From Key Video.

Charles Bronson has to kidnap Jill Ireland for the FBI but falls in love with her and then the bullets fly. Rod Steiger co-stars.

A Love In Germany—1984. Subtitled. 110 min. \$59.95. B&W Hi-Fi only. From RCA-Columbia Pictures Home Video.

One woman's passion during WW II becomes the greatest act of courage in this powerful film from Polish director Andrzej Wajda.

Love Strange Love—1982. 97 min. Unedited version 120 min. From Vestron Video.

A young boy is sent to a bordello to live with his mother who works there. Starring Vera Fischer and Mauro Mendonca.

Made In Heaven—1952. 90 min. \$59.95. From VidAmerica.

A Man Called Horse—1970. 114 min. \$59.98. From CBS/Fox Video.

Richard Harris stars as an Englishman who is captured by Indians, becomes a part of their tribe, and helps them protect themselves. Rousing adventure tale.

Marie's Lovers—1984. Rated R. 103 min. \$79.95. From MGM/UA Home Video.

Nastassja Kinski and John Savage star in this provocative tale of post-war innocence and postwar wounds. Co-stars Robert Mitchum, Anile Morris, Bud Cort, and Keith Carradine.

Marriage Is Alive And Well—1982. 97 min. \$59.95. Hi-Fi. From U.S.A. Home Video.

Joe Namath plays a wedding photographer who finds out the marriages aren't always live "happily ever after." Comedy also stars Judd Hirsh, Melinda Dillon.

Mass Appeal—1984. 99 min. \$79.95. From MCA Home Video.

The Master Ninja 4. Approx. 1 min. \$39.95. From Trans World Entertainment.

The Master Race—1944. B&W. 10 min. \$24.95. From RKO HomeVideo.

The Mean Season—1985. 106 min. \$79.95. From Thorn EMI/HBO Video.

Monty Welsh—1970. 106 min. \$59.98. From CBS/Fox Video.

Lee Marvin stars as an aging cowboy who finds the Old West disappearing around him. Jack Palance co-stars.

Most Wanted Westerns. Approx. 60 min. each. \$19.95 apiece. Hi-Fi. From Sony Video Software Operations.

15 classic John Wayne westerns from 1933-35.

Moving Out—1983. 91 min. Hi-Fi. \$69.95. From VidAmerica.

Mowgli's Brothers. 25 min. \$19.95. Hi-Fi. From Family Home Entertainment.

Roddy McDowell narrates the fable of a small child raised in the jungle by a pair of wolves. Directed by Chuck Jones.

Muppete Treasures. 56 min. \$59.98. From Playhouse Video.

Further adventures of the Muppets.

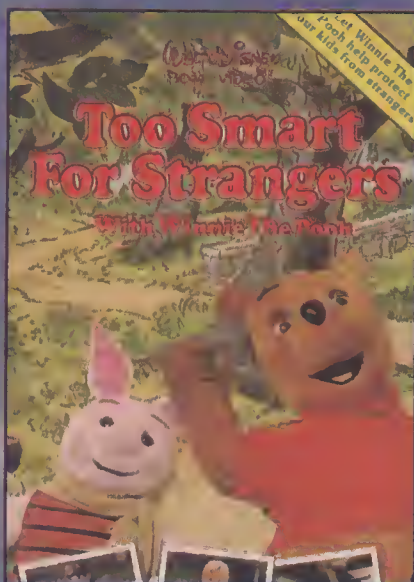
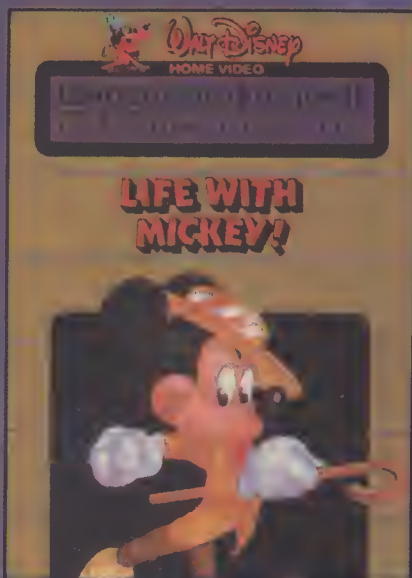
Murph The Surf—1975. 102 min. \$59.95. From Werner Home Video.

The Naked Face—1983. 105 min. \$79.95. From MGM/UA Home Video.

Roger Moore plays a psychiatrist who is stalked by sinister forces determined to destroy him. Also starring Rod Steiger, Elliott Gould, Art Carney.

New Zoo Review, Vol. 3 60 min. \$29.95. Hi-Fi. From Family Home Entertainment.





Special Effects—1985. Rated R. 90 min. \$79.95. From Embassy Home Entertainment.

Andrea is dying to get into the movies and she's about to get her wish as a film producer films her murder for his new picture. A shocking thriller.

Stories And Fables, Vols. 12 and 13. Approx. 50 min. \$49.95 each. From Walt Disney Home Video.

Fairy tales from the live-action series filmed worldwide. Each volume has two tales.

Strange And Deadly Occurrence—1974. 74 min. \$34.95. From Worldvision Enterprises.

The Strawberry Statement—1970. Rated R. 109 min. \$69.95. From MGM/UA Home Video.

An authentic eyewitness account of the student revolution that shook U.S. college campuses in the late '60s. Stars Bruce Davison and Kim Darby. Excellent soundtrack.

The Super Powers Collection. Each approx. 60 min. \$24.98. From Warner Home Video.

The Sword And The Rose—1953. 91 min. \$69.95. From Walt Disney Home Video.

A swashbuckler starring Glynnis Johns and Richard Todd with rousing swordplay and exotic locations. Robertson Justice is a wonderful Henry VIII.

Terror Beneath The Sea—1970. 85 min. \$39.95. Hi-Fi. From Monterey Home Video.

A mad scientist creates a team of monsters called "cyborgs." He must be stopped before it's too late! Stars Peggy Neal. Part of Midnight Madness series.

That's Dancing!—1985. 104 min. \$79.95. Hi-Fi. From MGM/UA Home Video.

Over 50 celebrated dancers from film and ballet appear in musical sequences from classic movies. Stars include everyone from Fred Astaire to Michael Jackson.

That's Singing—The Best Of Broadway—1982. 111 min. \$59.95. From Karl-Lorimar Home Video.

19 Broadway stars pay tribute to 20 of Broadway's biggest shows. Featured are Chita Rivera, Neil Carter, Glynnis Johns, Debbie Reynolds, Dianna Carroll, and many more.

Thunderbirds To The Rescue. 90 min. \$39.95. Hi-Fi. From Family Home Entertainment.

Filed in supermarionation, the story of the International Rescue

Organization, dedicated to keeping the world a safe place to live.

Till The End Of Time—1946. B&W 105 min. From RKO HomeVideo.

Tom & Jerry Cartoon Festival. 58 min. \$29.95. From MGM/UA Home Video.

Eight classic cartoons from 1942-'54 featuring the forever battling cat and mouse.



Tomboy—1985. Rated R. 91 min. From Vestron Video.

A tender romantic tale of a young female car mechanic determined to earn the respect and love of a superstar auto racer without giving up her tomboy ways. Stars Betsy Russell and Eric Douglas.

Too Smart For Strangers. 40 min. \$29.95. From Walt Disney Home Video.

Aimed for kids between 3 and 10. Disney characters use songs and live-action dramatizations to teach kids how to deal with such touchy issues as child safety and molestation.

Tuff Turf—1985. Rated R. 113 min. \$79.95. From New World Video.

James Spader plays a tough kid who gets involved in L.A. street gang violence. Stars Kim Richards, Paul Mones, with music by Southside Johnny and others.

Vietnam: The Ten Thousand Day War, Vols. 1-6. 49 min. each. \$29.95 apiece. From Embassy Home Entertainment.

Rare footage and interviews highlight the story of the 30 years of the Vietnam War. Begins with "America in Vietnam" up to "Firepower."

The WWF's Most Unusual Matches. Approx. 60 min. \$59.95. From Coliseum Video.

Wrestling's most bizarre, exciting matches. Snuka and Junkyard Dog

vs. Piper and Bob Orton. 10-man tagteams, lumberjack matches, strap battles, and more.

Walking Tall—Part 2—1975. 109 min. From Lightning Video.

Bo Svenson returns with a relentless vengeance to hunt the gunmen who killed his wife and seriously wounded him. Also starring Richard Jaeckel and Bruce Glover.

The War Lover—1962. B&W 105 min. \$59.95. Beta Hi-Fi only. From RCA-Columbia Pictures Home Video.

Steve McQueen plays Buzz Rickson, an incredibly brave B-17 pilot whose daredevil quest for thrills takes him to the brink of destruction. Co-starring Robert Wagner. Spectacular aerial footage.

The Wedding Party—1969. B&W 90 min. \$39.95. From VidAmerica.

Weight Watchers Magazine Guide To A Healthy Lifestyle. 56 min. From Vestron Video.

The first complete home video guide to healthy living that incorporates exercise, fitness, diet tips and low calorie recipes. Actress Lynn Redgrave is the hostess.



The Wonderful World Of Puss 'N Boots—1969. 81 min. From Vestron Video.

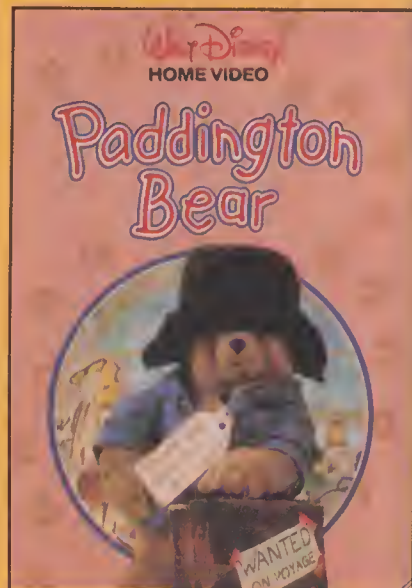
Animated adaptation of classic children's story.

Working Girls—1975. Rated R. 82 min. \$39.95. From Continental Video.

A sexy comedy about beautiful women who will do anything for money. Stars Cassandra Peterson (a.k.a. Elvira, horror hostess) and Sarah Kennedy.

Wuthering Heights—1939. B&W. 104 min. \$79.95. From Embassy Home Entertainment.

Laurence Olivier, Merle Oberon, and David Niven star in this classic romantic drama. Directed by William



Wyer. Part of Goldwyn Gold series. **You And Me, Kid, Vol. 4.** 112 min. \$49.95. From Walt Disney Home Video.

Popular series that provides songs, games, and activities for parents to share with their young children. With guest stars.

Yellow Hair And The Fortress Of Gold—1984. Rated R. From Lightning Video.

Laurence Landon stars as a woman sent by her Indian tribe to retrieve an elkhorn containing a map which tells how to reach the "fortress of gold."

August

Agathe Christie's Partners In Crime. 51 min. each. \$24.95 apiece. From Pacific Arts Video Records.

Alvin Purple—1973. 97 min. \$59.95. From New World Video.

Alvin Purple has a problem—women find him irresistible and this puts him in many humorous predicaments. Stars Graeme Blundell.

The Amazing Adventure Of Joe 90. 90 min. \$39.95. From Family Home Entertainment.

Supermarionation of a super agent's adventures. Fun for kids.

Among The Cinders—1983. 92 min. \$59.95. From New World Video.

The warm and human story of Nick, 16, coming of age in his native New Zealand; his first love, his bitter disappointments, his revelations. Stars Paul O'Shea.

Antony And Cleopatra—1973. 160 min. \$59.95. From Embassy Home Entertainment.

Charlton Heston and Hildegard Neil star in this breathtaking love epic. Heston directed this version of the Shakespeare play.

The Attack Of the Swamp Creature—1975. 96 min. \$29.95. From Thrillervideo.

Frank Crowell stars in this horror filled tale of a scientist whose experiment begins to run amok.

Australian Opera. Recorded Live At The Sydney Opera House. Hi-Fi. All approx. 140 min. \$69.95. apiece. From Sony Video Software Operations.

The Aviator—1985. 98 min. \$79.95. Hi-Fi. From MGM/UA Home Video.

Christopher Reeve stars in an action-filled romantic adventure as a pilot who must deliver his special cargo (Rosanna Arquette). They crash and the adventure begins.

Baby Love—1983. For mature viewers. 80 min. \$59.95. From MGM/UA Home Video.

A not-so-innocent beach blanket picture featuring 27 top-10 tunes from the '50s.

B.A.D. Cats—1979. 74 min. \$59.95. From Karl-Lorimar Home Video.

The B.A.D. Cats are a group of crime-busting cops on the trail of car thieves. Wild chases galore. Starring Vic Morrow, Michelle Pfeiffer, Steve Hanks.

Battle Hell—1956. B&W. 113 min. \$59.95. From VidAmerica.

Bill Cooby's Picture Page, Vol. 4. Approx. 60 min. \$49.95. From Walt Disney Home Video.

The popular entertainer combines fun and games with basic lessons to get toddlers started on the road to learning.

Blood Simple—1985. Rated R. 96 min. \$79.95. From MCA Home Video.

Boy, Did I Get A Wrong Number—1966. 100 min. \$59.98. From Playhouse Video.

Comedy gem starring Bob Hope, Elke Sommer, Phyllis Diller.

The Care Live 1984-'85. Approx. 45 min. Hi-Fi. From Vestron Music-Video.

The superstar group in a performance video.

Charlie Chaplin Films. Various times. \$39.98 each. From Playhouse Video.

The great comedian in *Woman Of Paris*, *Sunny Side* (one tape); *King Of New York*; *The Circus*; *A Day Of Pleasure* (one tape). Plus eight previously released classics being re-released.

Clean Slate (Coup De Torchon)—1981. Subtitled. 128 min. \$59.95. From Embassy Home Entertainment.

Nominated for "Best Foreign Film." A police officer in a small town is besieged with problems and he begins to get rid of the evil ones in his life. Bertrand Tavernier directed.

Cyrano de Bergerac—1976. 60 min. \$39.95. From Worldvision Enterprises.

DTV, Vol. 5. Approx. 60 min. \$49.95. From Walt Disney Home Video.

Latest volume of the music video series that sets Disney animation to hit songs; this one has tunes from the '60s.

Damien—The Loper Priest—1980. 100 min. \$59.95. From U.S.A. Home Video.

Ken Howard plays the Catholic priest who tended a Hawaiian leper colony in the 1800s.

The Dawn Patrol—1938. B&W. 103 min. \$59.98. From Key Video.

Classic film of aviators during WW I stars Errol Flynn and David Niven. Part of 24K Gold Series.

Damnation Alley—1977. 91 min. \$59.98. Hi-Fi. From Key Video.

Five survivors of a nuclear war travel across the country in search of other people who may be alive. Stars Jan Michael Vincent and George Peppard.

Dead Of Night—1972. 90 min. \$39.95. From Thrillervideo.

A Vietnam Vet returns a changed man—in fact, he may be a ghoul!



Seen by more than 600 million people around the world since its theatrical debut in 1940, Pinocchio is being released to the home video market following a record-breaking theatrical re-release this past holiday season.

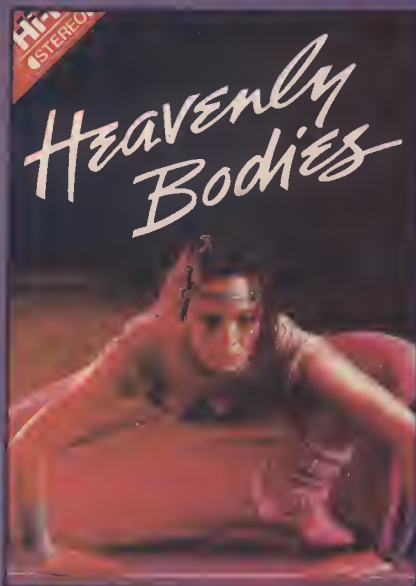
Set for release on VHS and Beta videocassettes and laser videodiscs in July, Pinocchio will carry a suggested retail price of \$79.95 on cassette and \$34.95 on disc. The running time of the full-color feature is 87 minutes.

Based on the 19th-century children's book by Carlo Collodi, Pinocchio tells the story of a little wooden puppet who is brought to life by a Blue Fairy and must prove himself worthy of becoming a real boy. His many exciting adventures feature a veritable "who's who" of animated characters, including Jiminy Cricket, The Blue Fairy, kindly old Geppetto, Figaro the cat, J. Worthington Foulfellow ("Honest John"), and Monstro the Whale.

"When You Wish Upon a Star," the Disney anthem that received instant popularity in 1940 when it was released as the theme song of Pinocchio, received one of two Academy Awards for music for the classic animated feature. Composed by Leigh Harline, with lyrics by Ned Washington, "When You Wish Upon a Star" was named "Best Song" in 1941 Academy voting.

Pinocchio is the second release on Walt Disney Home Video's "Classics" line of animated features. The first release on the line, Robin Hood has become a top-selling children's title since its home video debut last December.





The Dick Powell Theater. Approx. 55 min. \$24.95 each episode. From RKO HomeVideo

Dungeon Meeter.—1983. 80 min. From Lightning Video.

An ace troubleshooter for a large computer firm has the ability to communicate with an advanced computer. He is then forced to play "Dungeons and Dragons" in this futuristic thriller. Stars Richard Moll.

An Evening With The Royal Ballet.—1963. 87 min. \$29.95 From MCA Home Video

Feeble Tele Theatre. Approx. 50 min. each. \$39.98 apiece. From CBS/Fox Video.

Four new live action tales for children. Titles include: *Three Little Pigs*, *Little Mermaid*, *Dancing Princess*, and *Princess Who Had Never Laughed*.

Fether Figure.—1980. 94 min. From Lightning Video.

A father and his two sons must attempt to rebuild their tattered relationship after the mother dies. Stars Timothy Hutton, Hal Linden, and Jeremy Licht.

Fether Guido Serducci Goes To College. Approx. 70 min. From Vestron Video.

The funny cleric from "Saturday Night Live" gives his hilarious views of life.

Fetty Finn.—1984. 91 min. \$59.95. From VidAmerica

Ffolkes.—1980. 99 min. \$59.95. From MCA Home Video.

The Flxx: Live In The USA. 58 min. Hi-Fi. \$29.95. From MCA Home Video

Foreign Correspondent.—1940. B&W. 120 min. From Lightning Video.

A Hitchcock classic. A reporter in Europe during WWII gets involved with a Nazi spy ring. Stars Joel McCrea, Laraine Day, Herbert Marshall, and George Sanders

From The Life Of The Marlonettes.—1980. 104 min. \$39.95 From U.S.A. Home Video.

Ingmar Bergman directed this powerful drama of a man obsessed

with murdering his wife

The Fugitive Semurel.—1984. 92 min. \$59.95. Hi-Fi. From Sony Video Software Operations.

Get Started. 60 min. \$39.95 From Karl-Lorimar Home Video.

Richard Simmons helps you lose weight and develop a whole new way of life. Uses three individuals to show dramatic weight loss.

Hends Of The Ripper.—1971. 85 min. \$69.95. From VidAmerica.

Herd Hat & Legs.—1980. 94 min. From Lightning Video

Sharon Gless and Kevin Dobson star in this romantic comedy of a society divorcee's stormy love affair with a construction worker

Herdy Working.—1981. 90 min. \$59.98. From Playhouse Video.

Jerry Lewis' comeback film as he plays a circus clown moving from job to job.

Inch-High Private Eye.—1980. 60 min. \$39.95. From Worldvision Enterprises.

Kentucky Rifle.—1955. 80 min. \$39.95. From Monterey Home Video.

How the West was won with the aid of the famed rifle.

Lend Of The Lost, Vol. 2.—1974. 48 min. \$29.95. From Embassy Home Entertainment.

The adventures of a family lost in a strange prehistoric world. Fine family entertainment from Sid and Marty Krofft

Leurel & Herdy Films. Various times. \$29.98 each. From Playhouse Video

The hilarious duo team up for *Great Guns* and *The Bull Fighter*

The Life And Assassination Of The Kingfish.—1977. 100 min. \$59.95. From U.S.A. Home Video.

Ed Asner gave the performance of his life as the legendary Senator from Louisiana. Huey Long.

Lust In The Dust.—1985. Rated R. 85 min. \$79.95. From New World Video

Incredible western parody from the director of *Eating Raoul* (Paul Bartel). Stars Tab Hunter, Lainie Kazan, Cesar Romero, and female impersonator Divine. The Old West was never like this!

Melibu Express.—1985. Rated R. 101 min. \$59.95. From MCA Home Video.

Metropolis.—1984. 87 min. Digital stereo. From Vestron Video.

Georgio Moroder put the Fritz Lang science fiction film to a modern beat with amazing results.

The Mickey Mouse Club. Approx. 50 min. each. \$39.95. From Walt Disney Home Video.

First time ever on home video, the very popular '50s TV series starring Annette, Bobby, Cubby, and the whole Mouseketeer gang.

Mischief.—1985. Rated R. 97 min. \$79.98. From CBS/Fox Video.

Doug McKeon stars as a boy falling in love with the town beauty in a '50s Ohio town. Catherine Mary Stewart co-stars.

Moby Dick And The Mighty Mightor.—1980. 38 min. \$24.95. From Worldvision Enterprises

Monkey Business.—1931. B&W. 77 min. \$59.95. From MCA Home Video.

Mrs. Soffel.—1985. 113 min. \$79.95. Hi-Fi. From MGM/UA Home Video.

Diane Keaton and Mel Gibson star in this powerful film of a woman who falls in love with a condemned man and helps his escape. Directed by Gilliam Armstrong

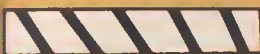


Mussolini And I—1985. 130 min. \$69.95. From Embassy Home Entertainment.

The struggle for power between Mussolini and his son-in-law, with his daughter caught in the middle. Stars Bob Hoskins, Anthony Hopkins, and Susan Sarandon.

Mysterlous Two—1982. 100 min. \$59.95. From U.S.A. Home Video.

John Forsythe plays an alien from another world recruiting followers in this sci-fi tale.



Mystery Island—1980. 75 min. \$59.95. From VidAmerica.

Nurses—1980. 105 min. \$59.95. From U.S.A. Home Video.

Michael Laarned plays a woman who resumes her nursing career after raising a family.

Oliver And The Artful Dodger. 90 min. \$49.95. From Worldvision Enterprises.

Only A Thief—1971. 74 min. \$59.95. From Karl-Lorimar Home Video.

Won Mystery Writers of America's award for Best TV Suspense Drama. Stars Richard Crenna as a man desperately trying to go straight while landing off the mob.

The Ordeal Of Dr. Mudd—1980. 143 min. \$39.95. From U.S.A. Home Video.

Dennis Weaver portrays the physician who unwittingly treated Lincoln's assassin and gets sent to prison.



Out Of Control—1985. Rated R. 78 min. \$69.95. From New World Video.

A wealthy high school senior promises his friends a weekend they'll never forget and when the eight crashland near an isolated island, the game turns deadly. Stars Martin Hewitt and Betsy Russell.

Peddington Bear, Vol. 2 Approx. 60 min. \$29.95. From Walt Disney Home Video.

The internationally loved bear in more heart-warming and loving adventures.

Perle, Texas—1984. 150 min. \$79.98. From CBS/Fox Video.

Harry Dean Stanton won many awards for his portrayal of a wanderer who gets reacquainted with his family.

Pearl Of The South Pacific—1955. 86 min. \$39.95. From Buena Vista Home Video.

Virginia Mayo and Dennis Morgan star in this exotic tale of murder. Part of the '50s Theatre line.

Prime Cut—1972. 86 min. \$59.98. From Kay Video.

Lee Marvin and Gene Hackman star in this crime melodrama set in a Kansas City slaughterhouse. Fest-paced film directed by Michael Ritchie.



Purple Rose Of Cairo—1985. 92 min. From Vestron Video.

Another Woody Allen classic as Mia Farrow stars as a woman who lives her life on the "silver screen." Danny Aiello co-stars.

Quintet—1979. 110 min. \$59.98. From Key Video.

Survival in a futuristic frozen city is directed by Robert Altman and stars Paul Newman, Bibi Andersson and Fernando Rey.

Red On Roundbell. 90 min. \$29.95 (I). From Best Film & Video Corp.

Rikki Tikki Tavi. Approx. 30 min. \$19.95. From Family Home Entertainment.

Animated version of the beloved Rudyard Kipling tale.

Ripped Off—1974. Rated R. 72 min. From Lightning Video.

Robert Blake and Ernest Borgnine star in this drama about a boxer who is framed for murdering his manager.

Robinson Crusoe And The Tiger—1972. 109 min. \$29.95. From Embassy Home Entertainment.

Family adventure as Crusoe saves a tiger who becomes his good friend.

The Rogues. Approx. 55 min. \$24.95 each episode. From RKO HomeVideo.



Run Rebecca, Run—1981. 90 min. \$59.95. From VidAmerica.

The Sandpiper—1965. 117 min. \$69.95. From MGM/UA Home Video.

When Elizabeth Taylor, a free-spirited artist, meets Richard Burton, a highly moral minister, the sparks begin to fly. Co-stars Eva Marie Saint.

Second Time Lucky—1984. 120 min. \$59.95. From Karl-Lorimar Home Video.

From the Garden of Eden to the world of rock videos this is a madcap romantic comedy starring Roger Wilson, Diane Franklin, Robert Morley, and Robert Helpmann.

Stick—1985. Rated R. 109 min. \$79.95. Hi-Fi. From MCA Home Video.

The Sure Thing—1985. 94 min. \$79.95. From Embassy Home Entertainment.

Rob Reiner's comedy stars John Cusack as a college freshman who sets out looking for a "sure thing" (a beautiful woman who won't say no and give guilt trips).



Sesab 2020—1980. 50 min. \$39.95. From Worldvision Enterprises.

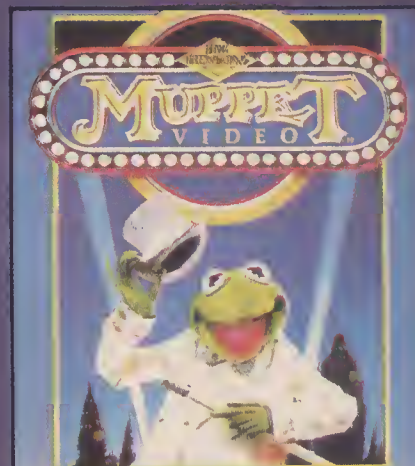
Smuggler's Cove—1983. 75 min. \$59.95. From VidAmerica.

Stella Dallas—1937. B&W. 106 min. \$69.95. From Embassy Home Entertainment.

King Vidor directed this classic soap opera. Barbara Stanwyck plays a woman who must let go of her daughter so the child can have a better life. Part of the Goldwyn Gold series.

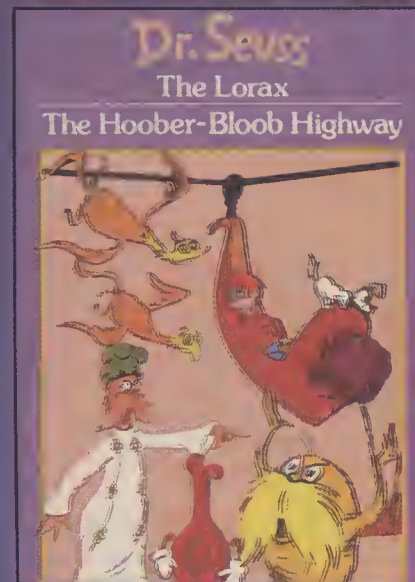
Summertime—1955. 98 min. \$69.95. From Embassy Home Entertainment.

Katherine Hepburn stars in David Lean's bittersweet story of a middle-aged secretary who has a brief affair with a handsome Italian (Rossano Brazzi). A classic romantic drama.



THE MUPPET REVUE

FEATURING...
HARRY BELAFONTE, RITA MOORENO,
LINDA RONSTADT, PAUL WHITMAN





Ten From Your "Show Of Shows"—1973. B&W. \$59.95. From Media Home Entertainment.

Terror In The Wax Museum—1973. 88 min. From Lightning Video.

Ray Milland, Broderick Crawford, Elsa Lanchester, Maurice Evans and John Carradine star in this chiller as wax figures of murderers come to life.

Theree And Ieebelle—1968. 102 min. \$39.95. From Monterey Home Video.

Study of two women in school and their growing relationship.

Three Three—1936. B&W. 92 min. \$69.95. From Embassy Home Entertainment.

Based on Lillian Hellman's play, "The Children's Hour." Three innocent people are cruelly punished because of a young girl's lie. Stars Merle Oberon, Miriam Hopkins, and Joel McCrea. Part of Goldwyn Gold series.

Thunder And Lightning—1977. 95 min. \$59.98. From Key Video.

David Carradine stars in the car-chase filled adventure of moonshiners against the law.

Turk 162—1985. 96 min. \$79.98. From CBS/Fox Video.

Timothy Hutton stars as a young man who fights the N.Y. City bureaucracy by using graffiti! Robert Culp and Kim Cattrall co-star.

Undergrads—1984. 102 min. \$69.95. From Walt Disney Home Video.

Art Carney plays a grandfather who is taken in by his college-age grandson and begins the life of a university undergrad.

Vietnam: The Ten Thousand Day War, Vol. 7-13. 49 min. each. \$29.95 apiece. From Embassy Home Entertainment.

Rare footage and interviews highlight history of 30 years of the Vietnam War. Narrated by Richard Basehart. Episodes begin with "Siege" and end with "The Unsung Soldiers."

With Six You Get Egg Roll—1968. 95 min. \$59.98. From Playhouse Video.

Doris Day and Brian Keith play a widow and widower who remarry and then the fun begins as their children meet and try to live together.

Y&T—Live At The San Francisco Civic. 60 min. \$19.95. Hi-Fi. From A&M Video.

Highlights the music of Y&T's four LPs: "Earthshaker," "Black Tiger," "Mean Streak," and "Rock & Roll's Gonna Seve The World."

Voltron Battles The Planet Of Doom. 83 min. \$49.95. Hi-Fi. From Sony Video Software Operations.

W—1974. 95 min. From Lightning Video.

Twiggy and Mel Ferrer star in this suspense thriller. "W" is the deadly secret shared by a beautiful girl, an escaped prisoner, and a detective.

Wild Gypsies—1969. 85 min. \$59.95. From New World Video.

Passion and violence run hot and thick as rival gypsies vie for control of their clan. Stars Todd Grange, Gayle Clark, and Laurel Welcome.



Berbere Woodhouse Goes To Beverly Hills. 52 min. \$24.95. From Pacific Arts Video Records.

Betty Lee's Ghost Town Jamboree. 60 min. \$49.95. From Kid Time Video.

Fun for kids, starring Ruth Buzzi.

Beyond Obsession—1985. 116 min. \$69.95. From VidAmerica.

Blame It On the Night—1985. \$79.98. From Key Video.

Nick Mancuso stars as a free spirit who suddenly has to raise a 15-year-old son he left behind many years ago.

Breekin' Through—1984. 73 min. \$69.95. From Walt Disney Home Video.

Ben Vereen stars as a traditional dance teacher who learns a thing or two from the street moves of a group of break dancers.

The City's Edge—1984. 86 min. \$59.95. From MGM/UA Home Video.

A decaying seaside city is a tough environment for two lovers who conquer suspicion, drugs, and circumstance to find hope for the future.

Clees of '63—1973. 74 min. \$59.95. From Karl-Lorimar Home Video.

Cliff Gorman and Joan Hackett star in this powerful tale of three people caught in a web of past memories and current desires.

Comic Book Kids, Vol. 2. 60 min. \$49.95. From Kid Time Video.

Entertainment for children.

Dr. Phibes Rise Again—1972. 89 min. From Vestron Video.

Vincent Price is the disgraced doctor searching for a way to bring his wife back to life. Campy horror.

The Fabulous Fleischer Folio, Vol. 3. Approx. 60 min. \$49.95. From Walt Disney Home Video.

More great cartoons from the studios of Max and Dave Fleischer in the '30s.

The Final Executioner—1984. 92 min. \$59.95. From MGM/UA Home Video.

A mysterious knight attempts to establish a system of justice in a world wrecked by atomic destruction.

Goss—1970. 79 min. From Lightning Video.

What happens to the world when a gas escapes and kills everyone over 30? Roger Corman directs and Bud Cort, Cindy Williams co-star.

Girls Just Went To Hava Fun—1985. 87 min. \$79.95. From New World Video.



Sarah Jessica Parker, Lee Montgomery, and Helen Hunt star in this story of three young girls who really went to have fun.

Golden Book Video—Each 30 min. \$14.95 (t). From Golden Book Video.
Galleth And The Barbarians—1960. 85 min. \$59.95. From MGM/UA Home Video.

Steve Reeves flexes his muscles to save an Italian village under attack from savages.

The Good Book. 60 min. \$49.95. From Kid Time Video.

Pareilles from The Bible. Live action teles with strong moral messages starring Robert Morse.

Great Books Collection Various Times. \$24.95 each. From MGM/UA Home Video.

Classic books made into movies from the MGM/UA archives. Titles include: **Knights Of The Round Table**, **The Yearling**, **The Four Horsemen Of The Apocalypse**, **Dr. Jekyll And Mr. Hyde**, **National Velvet**, **The Three Musketeers**, **The Red Badge Of Courage**, **Dragon Seed**, **David Copperfield**, **Captain Courageous**, **Ivanhoe**, **Pride And Prejudice**, **The Prisoner Of Zenda**, **Mutiny On The Bounty**, **A Tale Of Two Cities**, **The Good Earth**, **Treasure Island**, **The Adventures Of**

Huckleberry Finn, **Little Women**, and **Madame Bovary**.

Hometown USA—1979. 93 min. From Vestron Video.

Teenagers in the '50s have fun growing up. Stars Gary Springer and David Wilson.

Heavenly Bodies—1985. Rated R. \$79.98. Hi-Fi. From Key Video.

Cynthia Dale stars as a woman who tries out for a part as the morning "exercise" girl on TV and sets in motion a bouncing plot.

Horror Month. Various titles and times. \$19.95 (t) each. Hi-Fi. From Sony Video Software Operations.
Imagine The! Great Moments In History, Vol. 2. 60 min. \$49.95. From Kid Time Video.

Informative series for kids teaches history and stars Pat Morita, Arte Johnson, Scatmen Crothers.

Mission In Action II—1984. 97 min. \$79.95. From MGM/UA Home Video.

Chuck Norris returns to Vietnam to exact revenge on the soldiers who tortured him.

Mt. Rushmore. Approx. 40 min. \$39.95. From Kid Time Video.

Picturesque documentary narrated by Burgess Meredith.

Only With Married Men—1974. 74 min. \$59.95. From Kerl-Lorimar Home Video.

Michelle Lee plays a career woman who only dates married men. Dom DeLuise and David Birney costar in the marital comedy.

The Peace Killers—1971. 86 min. \$59.95. From New World Video.

Motorcycle gang terrorizes a commune. Stars Michael Ontkean, Clint Ritchie, Paul Prokop.

Satellite Rescue. Approx. 40 min. \$39.95. From Kid Time Video.

Exciting documentary of NASA mission.

The Shadow Of Chikara—1977. 96 min. \$69.95. From New World Video.

Action adventure starring Joe Don Baker and Sondra Locke.

The Shaggy D.A.—1976. 91 min. \$69.95. From Walt Disney Home Video.

A candidate for district attorney undergoes a "furry" change everytime an inscription is read from an ancient scarab. Dean Jones, Suzan-

ne Pleshette, Tim Conway star in the comedy classic.

Soldier Of The Night—1984. 89 min. \$59.95. From MGM/UA Home Video.

A woman suspects her lover of covert involvement in a string of murders in Tel Aviv.

Spirit Of West Point—1947. 77 min. \$39.95. From New World Video.

The story of the Academy's football greats. Stars Doc Blanchard, Tom Harmon, Glenn Davis, and Alan Hale, Jr.

Still The Beaver. Approx. 60 min. \$59.95. From Walt Disney Home Video.

First in the series from the Disney Channel that reunites the Cleaver family. The "Leave It To Beaver" gang have grown up but they're still fun.

Stories And Fables, Vol. 14-27. Approx. 60 min. \$49.95 each. From Walt Disney Home Video.

Fairy tales filmed on locations around the world.

SuperTed, Vol. 4. Approx. 60 min. \$49.95. From Walt Disney Home Video.

Animated fun as tough end lovable Ted combats crime with the aid of sidekick Spottyman.

Trep On Cougar Mountain—1972. 97 min. \$59.95. From New World Video.

Family entertainment stars Erik Lensen and Karen Steele.

Twine Of Evil—1972. 87 min. \$69.95. From VidAmerica.

Universe. Approx. 40 min. \$39.95. From Kid Time Video.

Documentary narrated by William Shatner.

Weiking Tell: The Final Chapter—1977. 112 min. From Lightning Video.

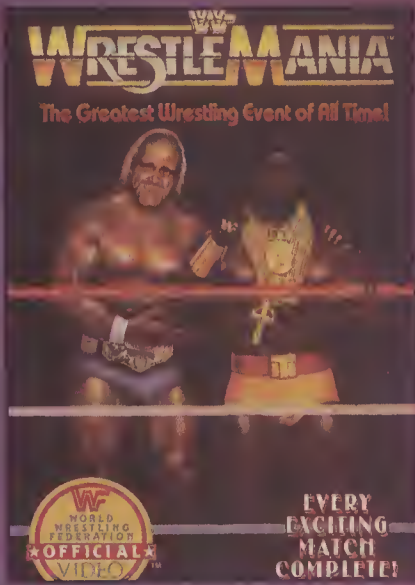
Bo Svenson once again plays the Tennessee sheriff who's one-man army against the bad guys.

Welcome To Pooh Corner, Vol. 5. Approx. 60 min. \$49.95. From Walt Disney Home Video.

Latest in the series that features Pooh the Bear in gentle songs and dances as well as learning activities for preschoolers.

Western Theater Line. Approx. 60 min. \$39.95 each. From Buena Vista Home Video.

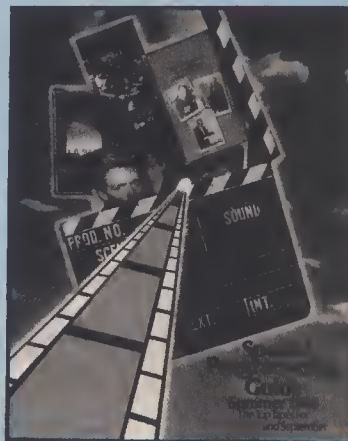
Two more adventures with Hopalong Cassidy.



FOR MORE PROGRAMMING INFORMATION

The companies listed below will be happy to provide more information about the titles we've supplied in this special programming guide. We've also provided the firm's top releases for the three-month period covered; many other titles will also be available.

There are currently over 16 million VCRs in use in the United States and these software firms have helped the video revolution by providing the entertainment the public demands. Major motion pictures. Music Videos. How-to. Interactive. As television opened the world to the viewing public, the wealth of new programs available for sale help to entertain, inform, and enlighten. Whatever your tastes may be, there are prerecorded videocassettes available. Happy viewing.



Look for our next programming guide in the November issue, on sale October 18, 1985.

A & M Video

1416 N. LaBrea Avenue
Hollywood, Calif. 90028
(213) 469-2411

Beat Film & Video Corp.

98 Cutter Mill Road
Great Neck, N.Y. 11021
(516) 487-4515

Buena Vista Home Video

(see Walt Disney Home Video)

CBS/Fox Video

1211 Sixth Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10036
(212) 819-3200

Children's Video Library

(See Vestron Video)

Collaerum Video

430 West 54th Street
New York, N.Y. 10019
(212) 489-8130 or (800) 223-4057

Continental Home Video

2320 Cotner Avenue
Los Angeles, Calif. 90064
(213) 477-8055

Walt Disney Home Video

500 S. Buena Vista Street
Burbank, Calif. 91521
(818) 840-1111 or (800) 423-2259

Embeeey Home Entertainment

1901 Avenue of the Stars
Los Angeles, Calif. 90067
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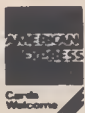
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Videotests

an LCD counter display and buttons for Reset and Memory. Then come the VCR/TV switch (with indicator) and the Power button with indicators for both power and charge. To the right of the clock are buttons for setting the clock and the two-week/two-program timer, and one for OTR (One Touch Record). The remainder of the right side is occupied by 12 pushbuttons for the preset tuner and windows for channel numbers.

Presetting the tuner is done in a compartment on the top panel just behind the

tuner section. In there are 12 sets of thumbwheels and curved slide switches to select the band. Little rotating arrows for each preset give you a rough idea of what part of the band you are tuned to, and the tuner brings in Channels A-1, A-2, and A to W in addition to 2 through 83. The top panel with the compartment is where you put the camcorder when connecting it to the tuner. Farther back is another step up that sports airholes and the battery-charging compartment at far right. The sides and bottom are bare, but the back

looks like those of most other VCRs. There are the usual audio, video, VHF, and UHF inputs and outputs, the Channel 3/4 VHF output selector, and a mini jack for the wired remote control. In addition to the AC cord there is one for connecting the tuner/timer to the camcorder; this has an 18-pin plug at the end. There is no convenience outlet. The remote control, on a long cord, offers only the basic tape-function controls without even a power-switch or channel-change button.

Operation. Since most of the frills are absent, operating the machine is straightforward—after you figure out one switch that, like a gearshift, gives you three operating modes: camera record, camera playback, and VCR. The one set of controls requiring further explanation are those for white balance. The indoor/outdoor switch gives you the basic presets if the tint control is at its clickstopped center position. The tint control includes manual variation. For most purposes it is easier to use auto white balance. However, manual control is recommended near sunrise or sunset, or if the scene is mostly a primary color or a single color. Then the automatic circuits may be tricked into neutralizing the dominant color.

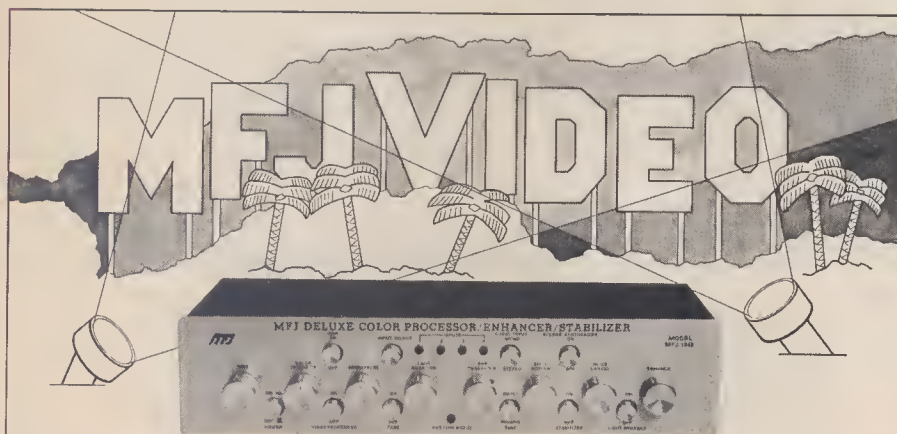
Auto focus has come a long way in the last three years. Though here it may engage in a little "hunting" under low light or in a few unusual situations, it remains stable most of the time. Auto fade and the date imprinter are useful.

Performance. Picture quality was good by 8mm standards. Horizontal resolution, a measure of picture sharpness, was 230 lines and video S/N, a measure of graininess, was 37.3dB unweighted and 40.4dB weighted. (If you're interested in 8mm in general compare these figures with the other two 8mm machines reviewed in this issue.) Chroma AM S/N (variations in color intensity) was 34dB, and chroma PM S/N was 33.9dB. To sum it up, the picture was somewhat less sharp and more grainy than on the best 8mm machines measured to date.

Audio quality, on the other hand, was very good—with frequency response flat to within 3dB from 40Hz to 14,000Hz, and within 13dB over the entire frequency range. Distortion was less than 0.6 percent and audio S/N was 52dB. That's in the class of FM radio and the best broadcast TV.

Operational ease was about average. You can find your way around without much help from the manual—but it wasn't outstandingly easy.

Conclusion. The GE Uni-Cam System produces pleasing pictures that are a step down from half-inch VCRs, but good compared to other 8mm machines. Audio was similar, but with a grade of very good among 8mm machines. Operating ease was OK but nothing to write home about. So overall performance was good/very good.



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Test Report: GE 1CVM5080E Uni-Cam 8mm Camcorder System

DATA

Date of test: May 1985
Suggested retail price: \$1239.95, camcorder; \$324.95, tuner/timer
Dimensions: 6-1/2 x 9-1/2 x 15 inches (h/w/d) with handle and viewfinder at full-extension
Power requirements: 8VDC, 8.3W approx., camcorder; 120VAC, 60Hz, 13W (38W with camcorder), tuner/timer
Battery life: 40 minutes
Battery recharge time: 13 hours with battery charger; may also be charged in tuner/timer
Image sensor: 1/3-inch Newvicon
Lens: f1.2; 6X (7-42mm) power zoom with macro range
Minimum focusing distance: 4 feet
Minimum illumination: 20 lux
Auto focus: yes, switchable to manual with one shot auto-focus capability
White balance: indoor/outdoor switch, auto/preset switch, tint control
Iris: automatic
Sensitivity: backlight button opens lens about an extra 1-1/2 stops for high-contrast scenes; nonlocking type must be manually held down
Viewfinder: electronic 1/2-inch CRT with on-screen indicator for iris-opening/low-light indicator, plus LEDs for record (green), auto fade engaged (red), outdoor setting (orange), and low battery (red) which doubles as dew indicator by flashing
Viewfinder controls: brightness, focus, magnifier adjustment for user's eyesight

Auto fade: yes
VCR controls: all, single unit
Microphone: electret condenser permanently attached to EVF, jack for external mic
Cable length: not applicable
Plug: for connection to tuner/timer or AC adapter, 18-pin
Accessories: battery, battery charger, audio/video cable, storage box, shoulder strap, earphone
Tape format: 8mm
Tape speeds: SP
Play speed select: not applicable
Still frame: yes
Frame advance: yes
Slow motion: no
Speed play: no
Rapid search: see Cue & review
Cue & review: 5X
Visible FF and Rew: no
Fast forward/rewind time: 2-1/2 minutes for 90 minute tape
Remote pause: no
Remote: through tuner/timer, wired, with buttons for Rewind (Scan), Fast Forward (Scan), Record, Play, Pause/Still, Frame Advance, Stop
Separate eject: yes
Counter digits: 4
Counter memory: yes
Program start locator/index/cue: no
Audio dub: no, both audio and video replaced together (see text)
Video dub: no (see above)
Auto rewind: yes
Stereo: no

Hi-Fi: AFM (see text)
Tuning method: random-access preset
Channel selectors: 12 pushbuttons
Preset method: curved slide switch and thumbwheel
Cable readiness: 2 to 6, A-1, A-2, A to I, 7 to 13, J to W, 14 to 83
AFT: switchable
Channel lock: yes
Timer: 2 programs, 2 weeks
Auto channel-change: yes
Accessories: wired remote control, antenna cables, transformers

RESULTS & RATINGS

Horizontal resolution: 230 lines
S/N, video luminance: 37.3dB unweighted; 40.4dB, weighted; 45.4dB, weighted and filtered at 1kHz
S/N, chromo AM: 34dB
S/N, chromo PM: 33.9dB
Audio frequency response: 40-10,000Hz, +0/-3dB; 20-20,000Hz, +0/-13dB
S/N, audio: 52dB
Audio distortion: less than 0.6%
Overall picture quality: good by 8mm standards
Audio quality: very good
Ease of operation: average
Overall performance: good/very good
Note: Now that we've tested 6 8mm systems by 5 different manufacturers, we have tentative standards on 8mm performance. We'll make comparisons with half-inch VCRs only when we think such a comparison contributes to your decision.



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Sanyo Portable 8mm VCR and Tuner/Timer



Without some familiar object nearby to indicate scale, you could easily mistake Sanyo's VCR88 for a half-inch table-model VCR. If your eyes

are sharp and you spot the telltale crack just left of center, you will recognize it as a docking portable. Though it is an 8mm machine, many of its features imitate those of its half-inch predecessors. It produces average pictures compared to other 8mm machines and in price (\$1100) it is comparable to half-inch portables.

Among its most likable features is the docking mechanism which connects the recorder to the tuner/timer without wires. After that its weight becomes the star. It's just 4.6 pounds with the battery connected, and one of the supplied accessories is a carrying case with a belt loop. That lets you carry the unit where you'll least notice its

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Videotests

weight. If you mate the VCR88 to the optional VSC800 camera ("Videotests," October 1984) your hands will hold only 2-3/8 pounds of a camera that feels like a 35mm still camera. We freely admit that we're prejudiced in favor of that division of weight and function. Sanyo offers a package deal with the VCR and camera for \$2000. That might seem steep compared to 8mm camcorders—but it includes a tuner/timer with an 8-program/14-day timer for which you'd have to pay extra, so it's not too bad a deal. The price is comparable with the cost of a half-portable, but with a considerable saving of the size and weight of the paraphernalia you must carry.

Another feature you may find useful is the choice of two recording speeds, SP (Standard Play), and LP (Long Play)—names borrowed from half-inch. This is the first 8mm unit to offer two speeds in the U.S. The LP speed increases maximum recording time to 3 hours with the 90-minute tapes available as we write this, and it will be up to 4 hours with the 120-minute cassettes that should be available by the time you read this. At the faster SP speed, cassette capacity will be 90 or 120 minutes. While recording with the VSC800 camera, the VCR battery lasts about an hour and it can be recharged in about the same length of time. Sanyo hasn't announced a car cord or means of recharging the battery without using the VCR and



tuner/timer—but if it doesn't, one of the "aftermarket" suppliers probably will.

Description. The VCR88 is an all-black machine that weighs 10-1/2 pounds with the VCR, tuner/timer, and battery in place. The whole package measures 3-1/8 inches high by 13-1/8 wide by 10-1/2 deep. The

VCR weighs 3.5 pounds and measures 2-1/2 inches high by 6 wide by 8-3/4 deep, and the battery adds 1.1 pounds and 1-1/4 inches to the depth. The VCR docks to the left side of the tuner/timer (T/T) and sits on a small pedestal with a back (a permanent part of the T/T). As you slide the

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Videotests

VCR onto its perch, guides insure correct mating of the connectors, and a lever at the lower left of the pedestal pushes them apart.

The VCR sports a fairly large display panel just left of center, most of which is used for a large four-digit counter display. The counter goes to negative numbers instead of counting down from 9999 when you wind past the 0000 point. Also in the display area are the conventional symbols for VCR functions stretching across the top. In a column along the left side of the

display are other indicators for SP, LP, a star for dew, and a Battery indicator. The battery indicator flashes when the battery is low but gives no indication of partial charge.

To the left of the indicator is the Power switch in the top left corner of the machine. It turns on just the VCR when it is separated, and both the VCR and T/T when they are connected. Below it is the Eject button. To the right of the indicator are the function controls organized in two rows. In the upper row are the extra-large Play but-

ton with the Stop button and Record slide switch to its right. Below the Play button are the Rewind and Fast Forward buttons, which double as Search controls (Review and Cue as we call them). Below the Stop button is Return, which returns the tape to the 0000 counter position from either direction if the recorder is stopped. Below the Record button is the Pause control. Not so obvious are three tiny buttons set into the silver trim running along just above the bottom edge of the machine. Farthest left is the SP/LP switch, then Edit on/off. In its on position the Edit button backspaces the tape in Record when you pause, producing glitch-free edits; it even produces clean edits if the VCR is turned off. The other control is a Counter Reset button.

The top of the VCR holds only the cassette hatch. On the left side near the back are mini jacks for an earphone and an external mic. A miniature 12-pin jack is provided for camera connection and a spring-loaded slide releases the battery, the only occupant of the rear panel. On the right side are a 30-pin connector and miniature concentric 2-pin RF output connector that mate with plugs on the T/T. The RF connector is not standard and Sanyo does not provide an adapter for you to connect the VCR directly to your set's antenna terminals. That's a pity because the RF modulator is in the VCR and it would be better to connect it to a TV without having to go through the T/T.

Another connector in the group is a 12VDC connector. It is again an unusual size, but Sanyo or some supplier is sure to come up with a cable so you can use an accessory battery pack or car cord. On the bottom is the Channel 3/4 RF output selector, plus an unusual switch—one that makes playback-speed selection auto or manual. We're accustomed to automatic playback-speed selection and in the half-inch formats it seems to work fine. Sanyo says the manual position enhances compatibility with tapes made on other 8mm VCRs. We found no difficulty in playing back tapes made on the six 8mm VCRs we've tested so far. Leave the switch on Auto, but it's good to know that it's there if you need it.

The tuner/timer has a short platform that extends left plus a back-panel extension to hold and guide the VCR into the docking connections. Mating plugs are on the left side. On the front panel, a little wider than the VCR, is another display for the tuner/timer and clock functions. To its left are buttons for Timer (with indicator) and OBR (one-button record). OBR lets you record the selected channel for up to five hours in half-hour increments. At the right of the display are Up and Down channel-scan buttons. On the silver-trim strip, from left to right, are a battery-charge indicator, the Clock Set/Cancel (program) button, Timer Set, (-) and (+) buttons (for setting the clock and timer and confirming the timer memory), the Memory button

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(which functions like the Set button on other VCRs), a recessed Reset button that clears all memory, and the VCR/TV button with an indicator. The bottom and right side are bare but for air holes, and the back panel has the VHF, UHF, audio, and video inputs and outputs, plus the power cord, an unswitched convenience AC outlet, and a switch that disables the wireless remote control in its off position.

A compartment on the top panel contains tuning controls. In there is a Normal/CATV switch and buttons for Search (automatic active channel-scan memory programming), Ch Memory (adding a channel skipped by Search but selected with the keypad on the remote), Erase (channel), and fine tuning Up and Down. All are clearly labeled except the Search button. That function is now becoming popular; it automatically enters all active channels in memory at one touch, which is a lot easier than having to memorize each channel separately.

The palm-size remote control operates on two supplied AAA batteries and offers buttons for Power, VCR/TV, Play, Rewind (Review), Fast Forward (Cue), Stop, Pause/Still, Record (two buttons), and tuning controls with a 10-key pad plus Up and Down Scan. Raised protectors on each side prevent the Power and one of the Record buttons from accidental use.

Operation. When you get past the hookup instructions in the manual, operating the VCR88 is easy for the most part—but you will find that some common controls have unusual names on this machine, e.g. OBR and Memory (Set). Others are for unusual functions like Return (which combines counter memory and activating the VCR to seek 0000 in either direction) and the Auto/Manual play-speed selector. Using those buttons once or twice is all it takes to get accustomed to them. In that respect using the VCR88 is easy. What is more difficult to get accustomed to is a series of oddities: having to disconnect the audio and video inputs to operate the tuner, having to use adapters because of the unusual connectors, the battery indicator that tells you the battery is exhausted only a few minutes before it quits (rather than telling the state of charge), and two buttons named Reset (one for the counter and one for the T/T memory). If this is your only VCR, you'll get used to its idiosyncrasies faster than if you're continually switching machines.

Performance. You may notice that we mention 8mm standards in this section for the first time. These are not format standards but our standards based on the six 8mm machines we've reviewed so far, including the three in this issue. The range of performance is still fairly close, but a pattern is starting to form.

Picture quality is average compared to other 8mm machines. Picture resolution is a bare 230 lines and video S/N is 41.2dB, unweighted; 45.6dB, weighted. Chroma

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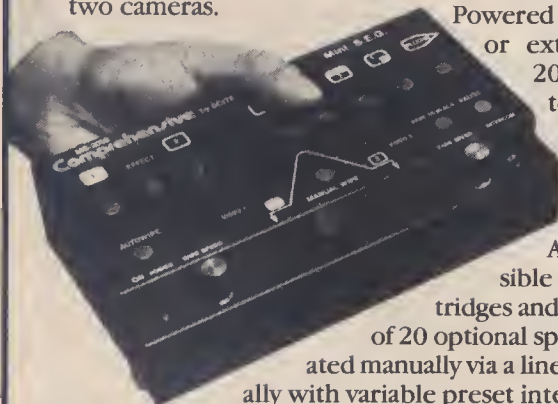
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Videotests

Test Report: Sanyo VCR88 Portable 8mm VCR and Tuner/Timer DATA

Date of test: May 1985

Suggested retail price: \$1100, including VCR, tuner/timer, battery, accessories; \$2000, above plus VSC800 camera

Weight: 3.5 pounds, VCR; 1.1 pounds, battery; 5.9 pounds, tuner/timer

Dimensions: 3-1/8 x 13-1/8 x 10-1/2 inches (h/w/d)

Power requirements: 12VDC, 6W, VCR; 120VAC, 60Hz, 34W, tuner/timer

Tape format: 8mm

Tape speeds: SP, LP. Note: this is the first two-speed 8mm VCR and the speed designations are the same as for VHS VCRs, but the tape moves slower—14.345mm/sec at SP and 7.173mm/sec at LP

Play speed select: switchable, manual or automatic

Still frame: yes

Frame advance: no

Slow motion: no

Speed play: no

Rapid search: see Cue & review

Cue & review: 8X, SP and LP

Visible FF and Rew: no

Fast forward/rewind time: 2-1/2 minutes for P6-90, 90 min. cassette

Remote pause: only through camera connector

Remote: IR wireless through tuner/timer—Power, VCR/TV, Play, Rewind (Reverse Search), Fast Forward (Forward Search), Stop, Pause/Still, Record (2 buttons), channel Up, Down and 10-key direct-access keypad

Separate eject: yes

Counter digits: 4

Counter memory: yes, called Reset

Program start locator/index/cue: no

Audio dub: no

Video dub: no, both picture and sound may be replaced together

Auto rewind: no

Stereo: no

Hi-Fi: AFM sound recording method gives the S/N of Hi-Fi but with slightly lower frequency response

Tuning method: frequency synthesis

Channel selectors: up/down scan on VCR; both Scan and keypad direct access on remote

Preset method: automatic programming of scan sequence

Cable readiness: 140 channels; 2 to 6, 4A, 5A, A-4 to A-1, A to I, 7 to 13, J to W, AA to CCC, 14 to 83

AFT: automatic

Channel lock: yes

Timer: 8 program, 14 days

Battery backup: 10 minutes; timer memory will be retained but clock may be slightly incorrect

Auto channel change: yes

Accessories: remote control with batteries, VCR battery pack, carrying case, shoulder strap, camera conversion cable, cassette, audio/video cable, antenna cables, transformers

RESULTS & RATINGS

Horizontal resolution: 230 lines

S/N, video luminance: 41.2dB, unweighted; 45.6dB, weighted either speed

S/N, chroma AM: 43.2dB, SP; 39.6dB, LP
S/N, chroma PM: 37.7dB, SP; 37.3dB, LP
Audio frequency response: 20-4000Hz, +0.3/-3dB, both channels; 20-14,000 Hz, +0.3/-6.2dB, SP; 20-10,000 Hz, +0.3/-6dB, LP
S/N, audio: better than 60dB
Audio distortion: less than 0.5%
Overall picture quality: average by 8mm standards; weak by Beta/VHS half-inch standards
Audio quality: fair by 8mm standards; excellent by half-inch linear standards; weak by half-inch Hi-Fi standards
Ease of operation: very good/excellent
Overall performance: good/average

AM S/N is 43.2dB at SP and 39.6dB at LP; Chroma PM S/N is 37.7dB at SP and 37.3dB at LP. The picture shows less detail than half-inch VCRs do and is a bit noisier. Color rendition is quite accurate—but with slight color smearing at the edges of objects.

On audio the VCR88 does not fare as well. At both speeds the only portion of the audio spectrum that is flat within 3dB is from 20 to 4000Hz. At SP, the higher frequencies fall to 6.2dB at 14,000Hz before disappearing, and at LP that disappearance comes at about 10,000Hz. That is weaker than other 8mm VCRs as well as VHS and Beta Hi-Fi, which also use the AFM recording principle, but better than Beta or VHS linear-track performance. So the VCR88's overall rating as an 8mm machine is just fair.

We covered the operational details earlier but did not give it a rating. Though we beefed about some things, we still consider it a very-good to borderline-excellent performer. Its major weaknesses are in connection rather than operation.

Conclusion. We like separate cameras and recorders because of the weight consideration, so we like this VCR. We like the price too. We like the two speeds. We have reservations about the connectors, the audio quality, and to some extent picture detail. This is a good/average performer with the emphasis on the "good." If you're now getting into VCRs it is worth considering. You could do worse, and small size does count for something.

GoldStar VHS VCR

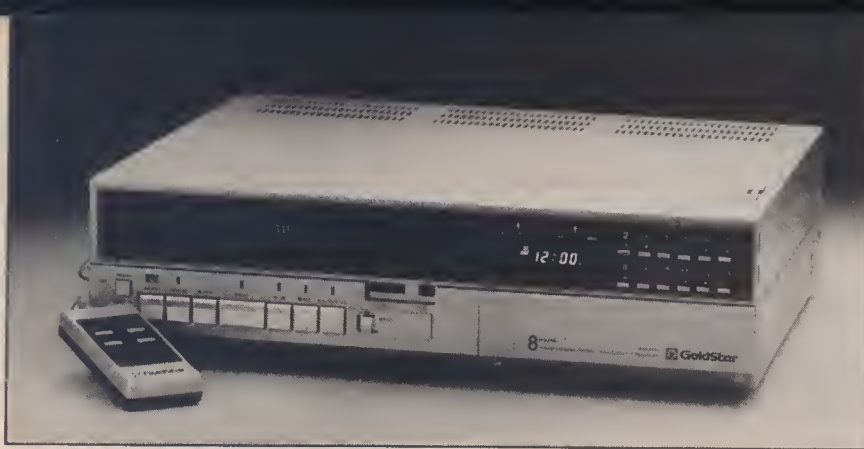


Korean manufacturers aroused quite a fuss when they announced they would bring their VCRs to the U.S. The fear was that they would flood the country with cheap VCRs and cut into the already slim profits of existing VCR brands. So far that hasn't happened: the Korean-made machines are priced

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about the same as their Japanese equivalents, if not a little higher, and they're not shabby as everyone feared. The Korean VCR makers are delivering basic machines or step-up machines at a competitive price. A good example is the GoldStar GHV-41FM.

The 41FM offers a modest set of features and good performance for its under-\$400 price. It even offers a 2-event/14-day timer (while most basic models offer just one event over periods as short as 24 hours). That puts it a step ahead of most basic models, and it does have what we think is the most-used feature on a VCR—cue-and-review-type visual search. GoldStar says that search function is available only at the SLP speed, but we found it usable at the other speeds as well though the picture was noisy.

Still, it is a basic machine, so many features we praise on the top-end VCRs we

usually review are absent.

Description. The GHV-41FM is a traditional silver grey with a black band across its top front. A little larger and heavier than the most modern designs, it is 4.9 inches high by 17 wide by 14 deep and weighs 26 pounds. At the left end of the black band is the cassette hatch; with its frame it occupies a little more than half of the black area. Next to the hatch is a display area. Shining through the window are the clock plus the day of the week and symbols needed for setting the timer. Above the window are discrete LED indicators for the current operating speed of the VCR, Line input, AFT on, and Dew. Farthest right are the buttons and indicators for the channel presets arranged in two rows.

The black band and its tiny silver border occupy about half of the front panel. In the silver area below are the main controls arranged in a traditional order. Farthest

left are square buttons for power and VCR/TV arranged one above the other. Strung out in a row are soft-touch buttons for transport and function control. Above each button is a legend and the standard symbol for the function, and above those are LED indicators for all except Stop. What is unusual is that all but two of the LEDs are the same color, size, and shape—vertical red bars.

Control order from left to right is Eject, Rewind (Review), Stop, Play, Fast Forward (Cue), Record, and Pause/Still. Given our druthers, we'd exchange the positions of Stop and Rewind so that the larger Play button would be flanked by Fast Forward and Rewind, rather than having the Stop button interrupt the sequence. That is such a minor point that most users won't notice it. Many major manufacturers make worse goofs in control placement.

The right end of this silver band appears bare except for the logo and product description, but that portion of the panel swings down to reveal the Timer button, a switch for Line/Tuner selection, the tracking control, and a set of adjustments for the clock and timer. Those controls consist of a slide switch (Program/Normal/Adjust) and buttons for Program number, On, Off, Day, Hour, Minute tens, Minute ones, and Channel. That last button is used for selecting the channel in the timer mode rather than the random-access pushbut-

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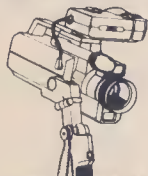
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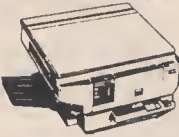
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tons in the black area above. Our only quibble about this group of controls is labeling the clock-set position Adjust instead of Clock. That aside, this is one of the easiest programmable timers we can remember.

The sides are bare except for air holes. The top has, in addition to air holes, a compartment for adjusting the channel presets. In that compartment on the right side near the front are 12 sets of slide switches and thumbwheels, one for each of the 12 channel presets. In these days of frequency-synthesis direct-access tuners, the tuning mechanisms used here are found only on basic VCRs. They work well and are relatively easy to adjust. The slide switch lets you choose a band: low VHF (Channels 2-6), high VHF (Channels 7-13), and UHF (Channels 14-83, but those above 72 are now reallocated to other services). The thumbwheel lets you select individual channels within each band. Also in that compartment is a slide switch for the AFT (automatic fine tuning).

The VCR comes with a wired remote that offers limited functions as one would expect on such a basic VCR: buttons for Stop, Play, Rewind (Review—reverse Search), and Fast Forward (Cue—forward Search). Noticeably absent is Pause/Still, the only omission on which we fault Gold-Star.

Operation. Basic VCRs have few controls. That makes them easy to operate because in offering fewer features, they also offer fewer wrong choices. The important buttons—those controlling tape function, tuning, timer, and signal handling—are well-labeled except for clock set, named Adjust. The only absent control we missed was Pause on the remote. Especially easy is setting the clock and timer: our surveys and letters suggest this is the task most people find difficult. This one is as simple to use as a single-event timer even though it can time two events.

Performance. No matter how simple or inexpensive a machine may be, it must produce acceptable picture and sound. Here the GHV-41FM shines because it offers 240 lines of horizontal resolution and a video signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) of 41.6dB unweighted, 45dB weighted. The S/N figures are within 1.5dB of the best we've measured on VHS machines. It is rated at 43dB, weighting unspecified. ("Weighting" refers to filtering the video signal before measuring noise, to reflect how much graininess annoys a viewer.) On color, Chroma AM S/N (variation in color intensity) was 45.2dB and Chroma PM S/N was 40+dB. So overall picture quality is very good by any consumer-VCR standard. (Note, though, that the new Super-Beta machines will raise the upper boundaries of picture performance.)

Audio performance is a bit less outstanding. But, this is not a Hi-Fi machine, so we cannot compare it to machines offering fantastic sound. Judged on its linear-track audio performance, the 41FM is good.

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Videotests

Test Report:
GoldStar GHV-41FM VHS VCR

DATA
Date of test: May 1985
Suggested retail price: \$399.95
Weight: 26 pounds
Dimensions: 4.9 x 17 x 14 inches (h/w/d)
Power requirements: 120VAC, 60Hz, 49W
Tape format: VHS
Tape speeds: SP, LP, SLP
Play speed select: automatic
Still frame: yes
Frame advance: no
Slaw motion: no
Speed play: no
Rapid search: see Cue & review
Cue & review: 9X, SLP (see text)
Visible FF and Rew: no
Fast forward/rewind time: 4 minutes for T-120 cassette
Remote (camera) pause: yes
Remote: wired, with buttons for Play, Stop, Fast Forward (forward Search), and Rewind (reverse Search); 15-foot cable
Separate eject: yes
Counter digits: 4
Counter memory: no
Program start lacatar/index/cue: no
Audio dub: no
Video dub: no
Auto rewind: yes, only in play mode
Stereo: no
Hi-Fi: no
Tuning method: varactor preset
Channel selectors: 12 pushbuttons, one for each preset
Preset method: slide switch and thumb-wheel, one for each preset
Cable readiness: none; 2-83 only
AFT: switchable
Channel lock: yes
Timer: 2 program, 2 week; battery back-up: none
Auto channel-change: yes
Accessories: wired remote control, channel number film, antenna cables, transformers

RESULTS & RATINGS
Horizontal resolution: 240 lines
S/N, video luminance: 43dB, rated; 41.6dB, unweighted, 45dB, weighted, measured
S/N, chroma AM: 45.2dB, measured
S/N, chroma PM: 40.2dB, measured
Audio frequency response: 80-10,000Hz, SP; 80-6300Hz, LP; 80-5000Hz, SLP, measured
S/N, audio: 41dB
Audio distortion: 2.7%
Overall picture quality: very good
Audio quality: good (linear standard)
Ease of operation: excellent
Overall performance: very good/good
Note: overall performance does not take into account the number of features, but how well those offered operate, plus the audio and video quality

Conclusion. We rate overall performance of GoldStar's GHV-41FM as very good/good. This might appear better than some top-end machines. GoldStar has succeeded in delivering a good value with its first VCR released in the U.S. The 41FM is well worth its price.

Zworykin

continued from page 72

tronic TV system. Yet he both was and wasn't ready—and here is where the myths start to spring.

Zworykin's own version of the story places his first demonstration in 1923. "In a few months [after returning to Westinghouse]...I assembled a completely electronic television system. I was so proud of the results that I spent considerable time in the library to find the proper name for it. The electronic pickup [camera] tube I named the 'Iconoscope' from two Greek words: *eikon*, image, and *skopein*, to see [watch]. The reproduction tube I named 'Kinescope,' from *kinein*, to move."

That Zworykin devised the iconoscope and the kinescope isn't in question; but his contention that he had invented them in 1923 doesn't hold up. Not even RCA's official multi-volume history by E.E. Bucher goes along with Zworykin's chronology, and Bucher tends to skew the credit in Zworykin's and RCA's favor. TV historian Albert Abramson, of the Archival Papers and Historical Committee of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers (SMPTE), also disagrees. In fact, neither Zworykin's initial unamended patent diagrams (available publicly) nor his own handwritten notes (some of which have been examined in an RCA vault by Abramson) support his contention. Yet even Zworykin's New York Times obit states that he invented the iconoscope in 1923.

The facts? Zworykin did give a demonstration of his partly electronic TV system for Westinghouse executives in the mid-1920s. He sent a faint, barely discernible image of a cross by wire from an electronic camera tube to an electronic picture tube. His TV system worked—barely. An unimpressed Westinghouse told him to get to work on something useful. It was a heavy blow, but he dutifully turned his attention to movie sound and other projects at least peripherally related to television.

Zworykin went ahead and applied on December 29, 1923 for a patent on a television system incorporating this electronic camera tube. He received U.S. patent #2,141,059 for it on December 20, 1938—after 15 years, major amendments, and a Patent Office refusal that reversed an appeal to a federal court. Yet his claims that these were the famed iconoscope and kinescope are not the truth.

These are the facts: Zworykin did not file a patent for the kinescope until November 16, 1929. According to one member of his research team, he didn't even have the idea for it until his return from a 1928 European trip to visit Westinghouse affiliates. For that first Westinghouse demonstration (which different sources place anywhere from 1923 to 1925), Zworykin evidently used a converted Western Electric oscillograph tube. He was hailing back to the spit-and-wire days of that radio station in

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As for the iconoscope, the rudimentary camera tube he used in the initial Westinghouse demo wasn't it. According to contemporary accounts and members of Zworykin's own research staff, work on the iconoscope wasn't begun until July 1929, and not completed until July 30, 1931. The first public presentation wouldn't be for nearly two more years after that. As the Patent Office would decide in the key patent-interference case—#64,027, *Farnsworth v. Zworykin*—Zworykin's earliest camera tube just didn't have globules. Soon everyone involved

would learn exactly what that meant.

In the meantime Zworykin did create the first workable electronic camera tube. And he had an electronic receiver, though he had not invented it. But there's nothing to document Zworykin's contention that his early Westinghouse demo represented the first "all-electronic" system. As he disclosed in patent applications and amendments filed through the rest of the decade, Zworykin generated at least the critical "synchronizing" signals mechanically rather than electronically. And by the time he did otherwise, Philo Farnsworth had already beaten him to all-electronic TV.

Our story concludes next month: Vladimir Zworykin and young Philo Farnsworth battle it out—in the laboratory and in the courts. **V**

Le Tube Boob

continued from page 76

er to import a 60-minute American police show than it is to finance a dramatic series made here. If money becomes the decisive factor, which it will if the state monopoly is broken, we can expect the quality of programs on the air to drop by 40 percent. I, for one, feel completely terrorized by the advent of private television."

How Small Is Small?

But the problems of French television cannot be blamed entirely on money, though most writers have to hold down full-time jobs elsewhere to make ends meet. The French mentality itself has a lot to do with it. In a country where intellectuals, writers, poets, and dramatists have long disdained the "*petit ecran*" as inferior to the cinema, pumping new blood into the system's hardened arteries looms as a major challenge. Unlike in Italy and the United States, where TV is often a testing ground for young talent, France's best filmmakers and scriptwriters snub television.

"It's as if there were two separate clubs, one for movie writers, one for television," says Cosmos. "The French lack imagination—producers from one area would never think of looking for material outside their own narrow circle. If they have a project to be done, they always use the same people."

"Television is considered second-class," complains Luc Merenda, who at 38 has recently emerged from *Chateaувallon* (see accompanying story) as one of French television's hottest male actors. He says he earns much less on TV than he would in movies, and dreams of going to Hollywood, "where the real TV professionals get respect."

Meanwhile, many see the move to loosen state controls on the airwaves as thoroughly political—timed to steal the thunder of France's ground-gaining opposition parties, which had already come out in favor of private TV. For Serge July, Editor of the leftist daily *Liberation*, Mitterrand is keenly aware of just how politically unpopular the current monopoly is among viewers who, for the most part, find TV dull. Since private TV will most likely be funded by advertising, Mitterrand is betting that he will win more votes than he loses by his aggressive assault on the cozy system that protects state TV from competition, small businessmen from big retail chains, and movies and moviehouses from declining ticket sales.

That means the current restrictions on what and how much advertising can be shown will be lifted. Today's laws ban commercials for over-the-counter drugs, real estate, retail stores, airlines, tourism, di-

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rect mail, jewelry, and textiles. Even margarine is a no-no. These products are hyped in movie theaters, during the 20-minute *co-seance* that precedes the showing of virtually all movies in France. But the *oopubs* (rhymes with "tubes"), as they are called here, rival the best rock videos in style and scope, and most moviegoers arrive early so as not to miss a single one.

Where does the state get the money to finance three state-run networks? Besides revenue from five to seven minutes of commercials sandwiched between programs (shown in full without interruption), every TV-set owner has to cough up a yearly license fee, the much-resented *ooredevance*: 526 francs for color (about \$50), 376 (about \$35) for black & white. And in what emerges as one of the most controversial taxes ever levied, VCR owners are squeezed for an additional 641 francs (about \$62). With the advent of private TV, these figures are expected to soar, though the VCR tax may be replaced by taxes slapped on blank tapes.

Taxes Cripple French Video

Francois Cazenave, Editor of *Tele Cine Video*, France's number-one video magazine, deplores the VCR tax and says it has effectively put the brakes on France's burgeoning video industry, and broken the momentum of VCR sales, which have leveled off since the initial boom. In 1984 the French bought some 440,000 machines—slightly more than the Spanish

(whose population and standard of living are far below the French's). As for England and Germany, they hosted four times as many VCR sales as France (1.5 and 1.73 million respectively). The VCR's \$500 to \$800 pricetag, a hefty chunk of the average Frenchman's monthly salary, makes it affordable only to the rich and leaves everybody else waiting for prices to drop. Rental is costly too, and attractive leasing plans—which in England have put a VCR in nearly every household—are nonexistent.

In New York we spoke to Jacques-Henri Djian, founding chairman of Cine Club Video, a high-caste program outlet that has spread from Paris to America. "They embargoed VCRs a couple of weeks after we opened our first store. They've done everything they could to kill the VCR. There are taxes on VCRs, surcharges—anything to make them difficult to get. I guess they want people to watch the French cable television." By the way, what's popular among the few French videophiles? "What's hot in Paris?—police movies. Clint Eastwood is very big." How about exercise tapes? Jane Fonda, maybe? "No," he chuckles. "None at all."

Private television will boost video sales, but it will also sound the death knell for Canal Plus, France's experiment with pay-TV which began last November. Its mix of movies, sports, news, and cartoons is available to anyone willing to buy a special VHF antenna, rent a decoding box, and pay the \$275 yearly charge. Though funded

largely by the state, Canal Plus needs to woo at least 200,000 subscribers to break even, since by law it too cannot show commercials.

Canal Plus started strong, but a mass of technical problems including a shortage of decoding boxes, plugs, and adapters, combined with the presidential announcement of private non-paying stations, scared off potential subscribers. By mid-winter Canal Plus was in the red. Canal Plus executive Marc Tessier has urged the government to let the station show ads, drop its present service to less profitable regions of the country, and broadcast movies on the weekend. And though he has not admitted it publicly, Tessier is looking into what would be a high-priced scheme to scrap the entire subscriber system (subscribers would be reimbursed) and go private.

The future of French television will be decided this year. Mitterrand has named a commission to draw up a report outlining the criteria and guidelines, both legal and financial, to be used to decide the number of stations and who will get them. That decision will be complicated by political interests. Private channels are said to be worth some 1.5 billion francs (\$100 million) in potential ad revenues, so the government will have its hands full in selecting among the 260 applications already submitted by publishing magnates, radio stations, movie companies, newspapers, and non-profit citizens' groups. While the Haute Antonte decides whether I watch Breton

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folkdancing or Provencale cuisine, I'll flip to the Disney Channel and wait for *Spin and Marty*.

Relight My Fire

continued from page 80

Followups to *Dance on Fire* can be expected if the video sells, though the lack of new Morrison material will necessitate more "story" videos along the lines of "L.A. Woman." Manzarek's longstanding interest in film and Densmore's current involvement in modern theater will undoubtedly come into play. Manzarek is typically nonchalant on the subject. "There's no rush. We get around to things when we get around to them." If record sales are any indication, the Doors are even more popular now than when Morrison was alive.

Neither Densmore nor Manzarek finds that hard to explain. "Maybe the projects have more input from Ray and Robby and me than Jim, because he's not around, but we're living in the '80s. People tell me the music we wrote 20 years ago sounds contemporary on the radio next to other songs."

Riders on the Storm

"I think the Doors' message is totally contemporary," Manzarek maintains. "We never sang about flower power, tune on, turn out, drop dead, whatever. The Doors were never about that. We were about the human condition, of any young person in post-WWII America. I don't think there's much difference between the '60s and the '80s and probably the '90s if we can keep from blowing up the planet. The problem is coming to grips with what it means to be alive on this planet and exploring all the passions and fears of the human psyche. That's all we were trying to do. The Doors were singing about life, and I don't think that has changed."

"The Doors worked together in rhythm. The beat is going, the chord changes, the guitar and keyboards flow and nobody smashes up against each other. I don't want to talk about violence, I want to talk about love, harmony, rhythm. The Africans believed that in the beginning there was rhythm. They believe rhythm was the foundation of the universe."

"That girl who wrote the letter, she was close. Jim wanted everyone to love everything. That's what the Doors were all about, man. Morrison was a violent figure, but he was all about love. Just unbounded, complete. Throw open the doors."

Beta Watch Out

continued from page 84

the world-famous Chinese Theater, Wonderful World of Video also stocks both formats. It sells as well as rents and many of its customers are tourists from out of town

who are relieved to find Beta cassettes on hand. The video manager, an enthusiastic young man named Paul, observes that customers who own Beta equipment sometimes have an edge over VHS users when it comes to renting hot new movie titles since the VHS inventory is in greater demand and runs out earlier. With machine prices as low as they are nowadays, he points out, more and more people are beginning to own VCRs of both formats—as he does—just so that they won't be disappointed when it comes time to rent a tape.

Stores like these may or may not represent local practices in other areas around the country. As with machines there are areas where prerecorded Beta is quite popular and other areas where VHS domination is almost total. Recognizing that finding Beta programs is becoming a problem in some areas, Sony is working on a solution. It has already established a "Beta Home Video Directory" in many parts of the country: all it takes is a quick call to an 800 number for information on where you can obtain a title. Ultimately, the service will be available nationwide.

But knowing where you can find a given title removes the fun and spontaneity of renting cassettes if you've got to drive halfway across town just to rent a tape that's readily available on VHS at the video store on the corner. Sony's answer to that dilemma is a series of new programs designed to provide incentives for video dealers to stock Beta programming alongside VHS. They will have to be powerful incentives indeed, what with gigantic new super video stores like New York's new Cine Club opening its doors with a library of nearly 150,000 cassettes—all VHS. In the early years of home video, the program market was secondary to machine sales. VCR salesmen emphasized the advantages of time-shifting TV shows off-air. Today a VCR is promoted as a "movie machine" and it's obvious that programming has become a "driving force in the industry," as the cliché goes—to the point where the popularity of inexpensive VHS machines and cheap rentals may help drive another nail into Beta's coffin.

Why Not a Sony VHS?

With VHS's fortunes on the rise, why doesn't Sony build a VHS machine of its own? The question has been asked of Sony personnel so many times, they now just smile patiently when it comes up again. Would Kodak sell Polaroid film? Would Coke admit that Pepsi tastes better (or vice versa)? Would a Ford executive buy a GM car? Sony is a proud company, with employees that regard their innovative and futurist founder, Akio Morita, with immense respect and admiration. They sincerely believe him when he has stated several times that Sony will never build a VHS machine.

So while I believe that a super-sophisticated Sony VHS machine would sell well—

Sony could, as Grundig has done in Europe, arrange all of the best features of the Beta system around a VHS cassette, including its famous U-load—it's unlikely that Sony would ever build such a machine, even if it appeared under someone else's brand name. Selling VHS tape is one thing (and Sony's decision a few years ago to sell that format has proven successful—it's now one of the leading brands of both Beta and VHS blank tapes). But making and selling a VHS VCR? I don't think it will ever happen. After all, Sony doesn't sell just Beta VCRs. Its consumer audio and broadcast divisions are doing quite well, so it's not as if it has to build a VHS machine to survive. What others would see in terms of economic expediency, Sony equates with a kind of technological ideology. Despite the enormous sales success of VHS over Beta, Sony is convinced that the format it invented is superior. And if you've been reading my articles in this magazine for the last half-dozen years, you'll know I agree.

At comparable recording speeds (BILL vs. EP/SLP) Beta does offer a sharper picture than VHS. Sony TV ads that asserted this fact to consumers were challenged by a VHS competitor but were sustained by a jury of the Ad Council set up to supervise such disputes. However, as one video dealer I interviewed noted, these differences in picture quality aren't apparent between Beta and VHS copies of the same prerecorded movie, especially viewed on a 19-inch set (the most common screen size).

Beta is faster to work with and easier to edit. Sony's venerable U-load system (used in the new 8mm camcorder) places less stress on the tape and, once threaded around the video drum, stays there until the cassette is ejected. That system makes editing on the Beta system easier and faster (omitting for the moment those few renegade Sanyo machines which unthread the tape *a la* VHS), since there is no delay or loss of tape continuity while the tape unthreads back into the cassette housing. Sony's newest Betamax, the SL-HF900, takes this editing ease one step further by allowing the user to insert either audio, video, or both onto a previously recorded tape with minimal picture distortion at the edit points.

Sony has also been consistently more innovative than the majority of its VHS competitors in coming up with new ideas that have later found their way into everyone's products. Visible picture search (BetaScan), the automatic cassette changer, noise-free double-azimuth special effects, Hi-Fi sound, the minaturized video drum found in Betamovie, linear-time readouts, flat motors, and more—all originated with Sony. And that's just in the home-video field. Let's not forget the award-winning Trinitron TV sets, the trend-setting Walkman, and the broadcast-quality Betacam camcorder, another Beta-based product that has now become a *de facto* standard for newsgathering at TV stations and net-

works around the country. Sony spends far more of its operating capital on research and development than most of its competitors, who prefer to sit back and imitate Sony's innovations (like the Walkman) once the product has proven itself.

Nuts & Bolts Thinking

Which leaves many to wonder: if Sony is so good, why has its supposedly superior format lost the battle with VHS? The answers to this one don't come as easily, although I offered an extensive analysis of the subject 18 months ago when Zenith jumped from Beta to VHS—and has since increased its VCR sales share by nearly

400 percent (see "Zenith's Ultimate Video Switch," January 1984). But perhaps the best explanation has to do with Sony's misunderstanding the habits of the mass of videophiles.

While Sony was extolling image quality and relatively esoteric technical advantages like U-loading, the VHS camp was promoting long-play recording and the day-to-day advantages of having a VCR, like time-shifting and playing back rental tapes. And despite some of the impressive features Sony did come up with first, it was slow to add more elementary and obvious features that the public wanted. Some examples: Sony should have had a mul-

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ti-event programmable VCR a long time before it finally offered its first one (the SL-5600 in 1980). And while the company may now claim to want to more fully develop the demand for portable video with its 8mm camcorder, it virtually abandoned that same area to the more sophisticated VHS portables sold between 1978 and 1981, fueling the consumer imbalance between the formats. When confronted with some of these lapses in wisdom, Sony personnel offer the explanation that "the market wasn't ready yet," almost as if to say Sony would "sell no feature before its time." Mere imitation of a VHS feature wasn't enough; it would have to await something new and improved from the Sony labs, even if consumers weren't prepared to sit still and wait for it. In that interval, of course, the less demanding VHS format captivated millions.

Looking ahead 10 years, will there still be Betamax VCRs? Of course. The millions already made and sold will still be around, nursed along by caring owners who will get them tweaked from time to time by skilled VCR technicians (most of them still in electronics school). But a lot of them, and a lot of VHS machines as well, will be filling the pages of the classified ads as well-worn bargain-priced specials that "need some work," just as early Beta and VHS machines do today. A decade from now both Beta and VHS will probably be minority formats compared to 8mm. Though now a fledgling format, 8mm has a

technical potential that far exceeds the capabilities of Beta or VHS.

Looking farther still into the future, even 8mm won't be around indefinitely. Nothing lasts forever, and with the pace of technological change escalating almost geometrically, it's hard to predict what medium home video might be in the future. Beta, VHS, 8mm—they're all part of an inevitable ongoing electronic evolution, video Darwinism if you will. What lies ahead? Recordable videodiscs perhaps, or maybe solid-state mass-memory storage? Maybe in the long term. What about the more immediate future? It's controversial-prediction time, folks!

Brace Yourself

While it may take as much as a decade for all those half-inch VCRs to become old-hat, I'll give the Beta format a practical life time of two years at best. Sony celebrates the 40th anniversary of its founding in 1986, so don't expect any cold waters to be poured over the format for the next year and a half—at least. And the 1986 line and marketing strategy are already well-planned, so that much of the future is secure as well. Beyond that, depending on how well consumers react to Sony's new 8mm camcorder (as well as the two-piece and deck-styled 8mm systems that will inevitably appear), the time will come when innovation and new features for the Beta format will cease. It's unlikely that Sony will just suspend manufacture alto-

gether, but a progressive phasedown will occur with a limited number of machines turned out as replacements for aging Beta decks already in consumer hands.

Lest any VHS stalwarts rush to castigate their Beta brethren with an intemperate "See, I told you so!," the same scenario awaits their format as well. But given the wider current acceptance of VHS I'd give it about another five years before you'll start to see the beginning of the end for this format. With more companies now manufacturing VHS equipment than ever before (including recent Korean and Taiwanese entries) chances are that newer versions of VHS machines will be available for a longer time than Beta, although as 8mm moves closer to becoming the worldwide standard it was always planned to be, even VHS manufacturers will eventually begin a progressive phasedown, making a limited number of replacement machines. For the moment, however, with new products like VHS Movie and VideoMovie in the stores now, VHS makers aren't as eager to push the 8mm format as Sony and Sanyo. The other existing 8mm contenders, Kodak and Polaroid, have no vested interest in any half-inch hardware, leaving G.E. and Canon as the only VHS companies ready to venture into 8mm waters, although ultimately they will be joined by many others.

Longtime readers who are aware of my biases are probably aching to ask some hard questions. Would I still recommend a Beta VCR to a friend? Yes, but only after

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determining his contemplated use of the VCR. If it's for casual time-shifting and playing prerecorded movies, I'd recommend VHS. I have given both my brother and sister VCRs as gifts, both of them VHS machines. My sister also has a Beta. On the other hand, I wouldn't hesitate to recommend a Beta machine to someone more interested in making and editing his own videotapes, pointing out the ease of use and faster editing capabilities of the Beta format. But in making that recommendation I'd make sure my consultee knew up front that he might be faced with a lack of Beta software at many rental stores, along with a not-infrequent dealer bias against the minority Beta format.

What do I own and use myself? Currently I own two VHS machines (a Panasonic PV-1730 and a Hitachi VT-89A) and three Betas (a Zenith VR-9800 portable, Sony SL-5600, and Sony SL-2700 Beta Hi-Fi). I've also got an RCA SJT-400 CED player and a Pioneer LD-1100 LaserVision player as well as a Sony SL-7200, Cartrivision VCR, and a Sanyo V-Cord, the latter three nonworking items being esconced in my "video museum" at the back of the garage. By owning machines of both formats, I can rent whatever is in stock, preferring Beta to VHS if it's available. I don't own a camera, but I've got my eye on an 8mm camcorder.

I'll leave you to figure out which brand it will be. 

Dream House

continued from page 88

feed. Next I put in one output line running directly upstairs to the master bedroom, and a second output down to the basement. While I was at it, I installed an extra video cable from the recreation room down to the basement for undetermined future uses.

Across the basement I ran a pair of video cables up through the walls to the second floor for connection to my office. I knew my working patterns well enough to realize there would be Saturday afternoons when having the ballgame on TV would be an essential added ingredient to writing, and so one of the wires would serve as a branch of the video distribution line. The second line is my high-tech "what if?" cable. Someday I expect to connect my PC to the video recorder for input or output of images. I may also use the cable for computer control of a remote videodisc system, for a remote optical recognition device, or for wonderful new applications I haven't imagined yet.

The video cable also extends to a terminating box in our son's bedroom where eventually he will have his own TV. We can also use the cable in his room as an output to the house's video system to use our video camera and portable VCR as an electronic babysitter, transmitting Willie's image throughout the house. And finally, the video cable also runs through the walls to a

linen-closet control panel where I can someday make neat alterations to the system without having to tear up the walls.

Video Distribution System

One of the key elements of the video design involved the video switcher, installed in the recreation-room control center. First of all, I knew that because of the many splits in the cable-TV and video-recorder wires, and the relatively lengthy feeds within the house from floor to floor, some sort of video amplifier would be necessary to maintain the quality of signal. I could also see that the only way to make sense of an otherwise overwhelming welter of input and output cables would be to use a video switchbox. The solution for my system was a combination amplifier and 3-by-3 switcher from Radio Shack. Similar units can be purchased from other sources.

My local cable system uses an addressable 68-channel punchbox to separate its various ordinary and premium channels, which meant that the only way to view or record a premium channel was to dial up its number on the punchbox. This device, as most VCR owners know, makes it difficult or impossible to use all of the preprogramming abilities of the modern VCR.

I took the incoming cable signal and ran it through a splitter. One of the resulting wires continued on to the cable company's decoder box and from there to the switcher; the other new cable feed went directly to the switcher. The third video input for my system is the output of the VCR.

Next I wired up the outputs. One wire went to the video recorder's input channel, a second went to the main TV in the recreation room, and a third went through another splitter dividing into cables for the upstairs sets and a small tube in the kitchen.

It is the use of the "raw" cable input that gives my system its flexibility. Most state-of-the-art "cable ready" TVs and VCRs can decode 60 or more channels from such a feed—the only thing they cannot do is unscramble properly encoded premium channels. With the raw feed and decoded feed I was able to use my switchbox to send to any TV the 68-channel signal, decoded premium stations, or VCR output. The VCR could receive one of the preselected premium channels or it could respond to my programming instructions and select from any of the other stations on the raw feed.

I suspect that one day I will have to add an even more versatile switcher when I tie in the video input and output lines from the computer room and other electronic devices not yet installed in our gadget-full house. (If your TVs do not include this expanded tuner range, you can instead purchase a VHF-to-UHF block converter that will change over the signal to a range of UHF channels accessible with any set's tuner. Such a device, though, will not unscramble any protected premium channels.)

A Stereo Control Room

The audio switching system is based around the six-position rotary switch on the stereo amplifier. This control oversees outputs to speaker systems A, B, and C, and allows various combinations of outputs. One set of wires goes directly to the speaker system in the recreation room. Two pairs of wires go up through the walls to a second-floor linen closet where I installed a pair of stereo volume controls. Although I could rely on the main stereo system to adjust volumes, I found that it was difficult to set the proper level from downstairs. This system also allows setting the audio level at a different volume in each room. And the exposed wires will allow for future expansions to the system, when my young son inevitably acquires his father's fascination with electronic toys and wants his own audio system in his bedroom.

In the recreation room and the master bedroom, the stereo system's speakers flank the TV sets. The audio output of my stereo VCR is plugged into the audio amplifier for distribution throughout the house. We have found that almost any videotape or live broadcast is enhanced by going through the VCR and audio amplifier.

The Electrical Remote

The remote-control electrical system in the house is based around the BSR System X-10 family of devices. These units use the electrical power system for communication and control. Available from BSR (or companies it manufactures for, including Radio Shack, Sears, and other companies) are wall switches, wall outlets, and a variety of plug-in modules to control lights or electrical motors. Each device can be set to an individual code (or a group can share a common code). A central controller then sends commands over the house's electrical system in what is called a "carrier signal" that resides outside of the normal range of usable current. Each device "listens" for its code to be called, and responds only to the proper identification. The control center can turn the devices on or off or it can dim or brighten them as needed. (The power supply of sophisticated electronic devices including most VCRs and personal computers should filter out the carrier signal without causing any interference.)

BSR and other suppliers sell several versions of the central controller, including one with a microprocessor-controlled clock that can automate four "events" a day on as many as eight devices or groups of devices, and a small unit that can be used for individual control of devices as needed. (In our house, the central unit works with the clock, and we keep an extra manual unit on the bedstand to allow us to override the program as needed. The bedside unit also has a "panic" button that will turn on all the BSR-controlled lights at once if we hear a strange sound in the night. And

yes, we do sleep better.)

Our system ordinarily controls turning the three sets of exterior lights for the house on and off, controlling a few hall lights for security purposes, and automating the baby's night light. (We like to keep a 10-watt light on when we first put Willie down to sleep; a few hours later the BSR controller dims that light down so that it will not disturb him or us in the middle of the night; at daybreak the BSR controller shuts off the light completely.)

Several computer-peripheral manufacturers also offer boards or plug-in boxes that work with the BSR controller. Tecmar's Device Master board is a sophisticated device that allows an almost unlimited number of complex controlling sequences. The main drawback is that the computer must remain on at all times to control the board. This system might be better suited for industrial uses. Also available are some standalone devices programmed by the computer, but operating independently. One such device is sold by Heath and another by Automatic Micro.

Cutting Ma Bell's Cord

With the deregulation of AT&T and local telephone companies, homeowners and renters won the right to own their own telephone equipment. A less-well-known element of the change in law was that customers could also own and install their own internal wiring. This offers a fair amount of


savings at installation time (perhaps \$75 to \$100 in fees for wiring of several rooms), and saves a few dollars every month in "wire rental" charges. On the downside, the phone company will not look kindly (and will bill you accordingly) on a repair call for problems in wiring it did not install.

If you go this route, ask the phone company to install a "network interface" box. This amounts to a single-plug outlet just inside your property—in our case, mounted on the inside wall of the basement. The phone company installer will run a line to the interface from the telephone pole or underground cable and then go home. All you have to do is run all the telephone wires in your house to a terminal block (an inexpensive splitter/combiner available from Radio Shack, AT&T, and other suppliers) and plug the block into the interface.

If you ever have telephone trouble, the first thing to do is take a telephone you know to be working and plug it directly into the network interface box. If the phone works there, the problem, alas, is in your wiring. Some phone companies, New York Telephone among them, will sell a "testable" network interface box for a small extra charge, and I recommend this option. The testable device includes a loopback circuit that allows the phone company to test its line—without a visit from the repairman.

Post Electronics Mortem

You might say that we have managed to

build one of those "homes with a brain" that used to be featured on the covers of the pulp science magazines of ten years ago. We've been living in our electronic house for two years now, and almost all the systems are working just as we had planned. My wife did change her mind about a few pieces of furniture, which left some needed outlets hidden and other unwanted outlets exposed. And the baby found a way to squeeze behind the stereo rack and do a bit of his own rewiring. But all in all, we're a happily wired house and family. 

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Videoheads

continued from page 94

those narrow "guardband" spaces began to show up on the screen as ugly wide noise bars that made the picture difficult to see. Ditto for other effects like still frame and slow motion. Tricks like these call for an almost perfect matching of the width of the recorded video tracks with the heads being used to play them back, so a newer technology was needed.

Tech-4 was the solution. It ingeniously solves a lot of VHS tape-interchange problems while simultaneously improving SFX quality. It's a four-head system, but—to the naked eye—it doesn't look it. That's because the four heads are built into two side-by-side assemblies positioned on opposite sides of the video drum. The assembly on one side of the drum will have an SP head with a positive azimuth angle, while its next door neighbor will have an SLP head with a negative azimuth angle. One hundred eighty degrees away, on the other side of the drum, you'll find another SP head with a negative azimuth angle and its smaller SLP neighbor with a positive azimuth angle. The width of each head has been carefully chosen to insure not only good recording at both the SP and SLP speeds, but excellent picture search and slow/still playback as well. Plus, like the three-head Sony VCRs, it's a matched-azimuth system. For noiseless special effects, a positive-azimuth SP head teams up with a positive-azimuth SLP head.

But the biggest trick of all is in the picture search. To minimize those objectionably wide noise bars when playing back tapes made on simpler decks with only two narrow video heads, Tech-4 uses *all four heads* for SP scanning, optimizing the width of the heads with the track widths found on the tape regardless of which VCR was recorded on. Clever. But the gambit means a small compromise in SP recording quality. Since the VHS format allows for a full SP track pitch of 58 microns, the size of the SP heads used for Tech-4 doesn't fully fill up the tape with video information. Small guardband spaces still remain, and these show up in the form of wider noise bars when you play back a Tech-4 tape on a VCR using heads with different widths (such as the Hitachi five-headers we will soon discuss).

Most recently, JVC has adopted a similar technology in its latest high-end VCRs, like the HR-D725 Hi-Fi machine. While the actual dimensions of the head widths are slightly different, the idea is much the same. Along with Zenith, Jensen, Teac, Kenwood, Sansui, and NEC, which also sell JVC-built VCRs (NEC is also building some of their own), JVC can now offer comparable noise-free matched-azimuth special effects including SP picture search with negligible noise-bar interference—the result of using all four video

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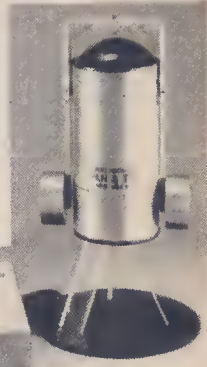
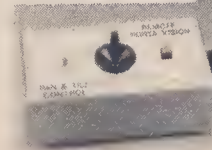
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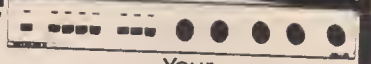
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heads to scan the tape in the search mode. Similar systems are now being used by the three other independent VHS manufacturers—Mitsubishi, Sharp, and Akai—on their high-end offerings.

JVC gets the credit for another VHS four-head innovation that has appeared recently, and it represents a similar multi-head approach to video recording. While most conventional VCRs rely on two recording heads, each situated 180 degrees apart on the opposite sides of the rotating video drum, JVC had to figure out another way to accomplish the same thing in a much smaller space for its diminutive GR-C1U VideoMovie VHSC camcorder. While a regular VHS recorder has a drum that's 62mm in diameter, VideoMovie's drum is only one-third that size. Four SP-only heads are used for recording, while the tape is wrapped 270 degrees around the drum, rather than the 180 degrees used in conventional systems. All four heads are used for recording and playback with two sequenced heads sharing the same azimuth angle being used to lay down the track for a single video field. Consequently, when you place the miniature TC-20 cassette into an adapter and play it back on a regular VHS machine, the track geometry on the tape remains compatible.

The Beta format has its share of four-head VCRs, but they work differently than their VHS counterparts. While Sony pioneered the three-head double-azimuth system, Toshiba gets the credit for the four-head matched-azimuth system that first appeared in the V-9500 VCR a few years ago. While most sophisticated VHS VCRs need four heads to offer quality recording and special-effects playback at all three speeds (or like JVC at a fast SP speed of 3.335 cm/sec and a much slower 1.11 cm/sec), Beta manufacturers have only two speeds to worry about, Beta II and III, which run at 2 cm/sec and 1.33 cm/sec respectively. That closer spacing lets Beta designers use just two video heads to record and play back at both speeds.

For noise-free special effects Toshiba decided to add a second set of heads with matching azimuths on the same drum, but separated from the main heads by 90 degrees. This system offered a slight improvement in SFX quality over Sony's system since the trick playback heads could be positioned exactly 180 degrees apart, rather than slightly less than that as in the Sony system. The tradeoff is in the more difficult drum construction required and the higher cost of building more complicated rotary transformers needed for any multiple-head system.

5-, 6- & 7-Headed VCRs

With everyone climbing on the bandwagon for noise-free matched-azimuth special effects, it was just a matter of time before Hitachi had a similar system. But it's different from the others. Essentially, Hitachi took the four-head system it had been selling for a few years and added a fifth head to

it—one with a positive azimuth and width that made it compatible with both the positive azimuth SP head and the positive azimuth EP (AKA SLP) head. The fifth head is not used for recording—only for still-frame and slow-motion effects at both SP and EP, teaming up with a matched-azimuth head from the regular EP record/playback team.

While more complex than any of the other systems we've looked at so far, one advantage of this system is that, for SP recordings, the width of the heads used are 75 microns wide—more than enough to insure a full 58-micron track geometry on the tape. One disadvantage is that when playing back SP tapes made on decks with narrower heads, one sees wider noise bars in the search mode and sometimes in the still/slow modes. Most of the noise in the still/slow modes can be dialed out using the slow-tracking controls—but not always.

When Sony and the other members of the Beta group introduced the Beta Hi-Fi system (or AFM, for Audio Frequency Modulation), they added audio subcarriers to the video signal and recorded video and audio together on the tape with the rotating video heads.

VHS Hi-Fi, which appeared about a year later, uses similar technology. But due to a difference in the bandwidth parameters of VHS and Beta, VHS engineers couldn't simply combine the Hi-Fi audio with the video and record both with a single set of heads. Instead they added two new "audio only" heads on the rotating drum. There are two of them, and just like the video heads, they have opposing azimuth angles (in this case plus or minus 30 degrees). That angle is sufficient to keep adjacent audio channels from interfering with each other as well as prevent the audio signals—which are recorded on the tape first—from interfering with the video signals, which are recorded directly on top of the Hi-Fi audio.

The ads you've seen for some of these new VHS Hi-Fi machines extolling the virtues of six or seven video heads therefore aren't clear about what's under the hood. Any six-head VHS Hi-Fi machine is really a four-head machine in its video characteristics. And any seven-head machine is really a five-header built by Hitachi. To avoid confusing the consumer as to the precise number of heads used in its latest Hi-Fi VCRs, Hitachi's newest VT-89A is labeled "5+ Head Hi-Fi," making it clear that five heads are used for video purposes and two for recording and playing back the Hi-Fi signals.

It's also a good idea when weighing the pros and cons of a VHS Hi-Fi machine to be careful about how the heads are assigned. RCA's VKT-550 and Hitachi's VT-88A, for example, have five heads—but two are for Hi-Fi. That means that they're really only three-head VCRs and their video performance, especially in the area of special effects, won't equal some other non-Hi-Fi machine which also has five heads.

1-Headers, 8mm & 'Piezo'

Why save this for last? It's been only lately that a one-head VCR has evolved. Strictly speaking it's a two-header since the signal recorded on the tape has to consist of a field from a head with a positive-azimuth and another field from a negative-azimuth head. But since both heads are milled from a single chip, call it a one-header.

The product in which you'll find it is the Betamovie camcorder. When Sony, Sanyo, Toshiba, and NEC took the wraps off Betamovie two years ago, there was a lot of speculation as to how they had managed to make it so small and still keep it compatible with regular Beta cassettes. The answer, as we now know, was to use a much smaller video drum—it's only 44.671mm in diameter compared to the regular 74.487mm drum found in bigger Betas. The tape is also wrapped 300 degrees around the drum rather than the usual 180 degrees. Despite the smaller size and more elaborate tape threading, the recorded Betamovie signal is completely compatible with other Beta VCRs.

Most of the technical talk in this story has centered on the evolution of video-head design in the Beta and VHS formats. But the new 8mm system—notwithstanding the smaller size of the machine and cassette—is still a helical-scan video system like its bigger brothers, and some interesting video-head variations have already appeared in this new format.

Sony's new CCD-V8 (see this month's "TV Den" and "Videotest") uses two heads, wrapping the tape in a miniaturized U-load around a standard (for 8mm) 40mm drum. That's similar to Kodak's Model 2200 Kodavision camcorder and the Sanyo and Sears 8mm portables, which also use two heads. The Kodak 2400 and G.E. versions use three heads; the third is used to obtain a noise-free matched-azimuth still frame. Finally, Canon's 8mm Canovision has four heads: two for recording and playback and two matched-azimuth heads for SFX playback. So the designs are similar to those for Beta and VHS, although with drum diameters and head widths specifically formulated for 8mm video.

Panasonic's NV-8950 is a unique four-head industrial VCR with a "piezo controlled" head system that uses two mobile 30-micron heads for SFX. The heads are attached to an actuator that moves up and down in response to signals from the VCR's advanced circuitry. This system overcomes problems created by changes in head-to-tape relationships (which occur in most SFX modes), and the result is virtually noiseless SFX.

Let's see, now. We've got VCRs with one head, lots with two heads, many with three heads, plenty with four heads, quite a bunch with five heads, and growing numbers with six and seven heads. Is an eight-headed VCR on the horizon? I doubt it—but anything is possible.



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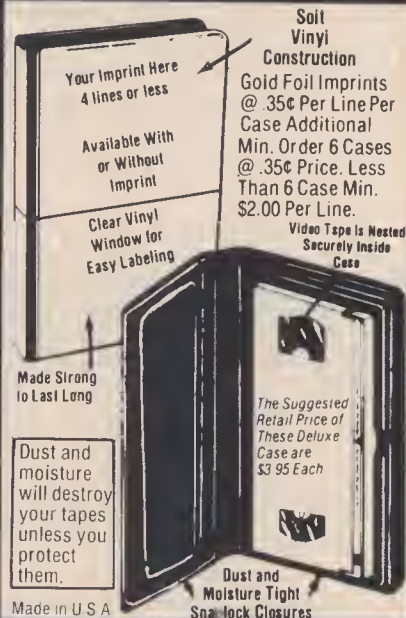
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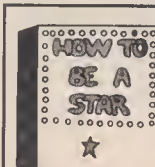
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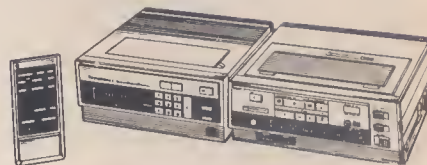
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Dateline Tokyo

Letter from Japan

by Ichiro Kakehashi

Video Plus

Shozo Tsurumoto is a 49-year-old designer-turned-arts-entrepreneur whose creative sparks fly in several directions at once. He strongly believes that video isn't just a medium for watching baseball games and quiz shows. What sets him apart from most of the rest of us who feel that way, however, is that he has both the moxie and the means to fan his sparks into flame, to stage video performances that add something more. His Tsurumoto Room Company, in the trendy Harajuku fashion district of Tokyo, produces the Japanese-language version of *Starlog* magazine and stages about a dozen events a year—exhibits and live performances—in four spaces at three LaForet Museums around Tokyo.

The forum for one of Tsurumoto's performance-arts brainstorming was the Contemporary Arts Symposium, held this spring in Boston and sponsored by the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities. The theme was "collaborative sponsorship and execution," to which Tsurumoto proposed adding a video dimension based on the Sony Corporation's JumboTRON. JumboTRON is a 25-by-40-meter (92-by-131-foot) drive-in movie-like display that is probably the most visible example of prevailing video technology at an otherwise low-tech Expo '85 at Tsukuba, northeast of Tokyo. JumboTRON is an \$8.5

million investment that Sony would like to recoup by making it a sellable product. The Sony people were thus as much pleased as surprised to hear about an idea to make their creation more than a costly memory after Expo '85 folds in mid-September.

"I want Harajuku to be known for much more than fashion, for new cultural pursuits in arts and performance arts in particular, from Japan and elsewhere," Tsurumoto said when he returned to Tokyo to flesh out his idea. His role as a finder and producer of events featuring promising young artistic talent has been enhanced here by the critical success of the recent Tokyo Performance Art Festival. But that combination of music, dance, video, film, light, percussion, and "cooking as art" was—given the limits of space and time—an event that could reach only perhaps 350 people a night. Tsurumoto's idea, to which his own staff and like-minded producers in Boston and in Europe have since warmed, is to produce international performance-arts collaborations using JumboTRON technology to form one wall of an exhibition space, and to beam artists from one continent to another in a real-time artistic teleperformance.

This, Tsurumoto said, would be much more than a grand-scale variety show. "The performance has to be an active medium in which the artist live and the artist onscreen complement each other. In using JumboTRON as part of the exhibit space itself, we are able to add another dimension in which the medium itself can be part of the artform as much as the performers."

High Times

More on the high-resolution front: the Sharp Corporation is offering domestic versions of 21-inch and 19-inch color sets that have horizontal resolution of approximately 500 lines, compared with about 230 lines for conventional TVs. The sets can be swiveled and tilted 30 degrees to the left and 20 to the right, or 10 degrees forward. Both are designed for video and computer input, with 21-pin RGB terminals, three video inputs, and a monitor output. The picture tube is a flat square-corner monitor-quality tube designed to display 2000 characters.


The other aspect of HDTV's prospects is the apparent willingness of the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) to go along with the motion-picture industry in the United States on a somewhat wider high-definition TV picture than originally had been proposed. NHK engineers had been promoting a 3:5 "aspect ratio" (the proportion of screen depth in relation to width) for high-def, but the moviemakers and broadcasters in the United States wanted a slightly wider aspect ratio of 3:5.33 to conform to the proportions of a standard movie screen. The difference would make it much easier to convert movies for broadcasting, and would eliminate the irksome borders and corrective distortion from wide-screen epics.

One reason NHK engineers first went with the 3:5 aspect ratio is that the extra width the Americans want would require about a six-percent increase in bandwidth. But the engineers say

that NHK's MUSE (for multiple sub-Nyquist sampling encoding) bandwidth-compression method can compress the signal, letting it be carried on one satellite channel.

In the Pink

If cuteness were an export commodity, it could easily outpace Japan's VCRs in production value. You can be thankful it isn't. At least the noontime programming in the United States is not preempted by live press conferences in which teen idols like Matsuda Seiko announce their engagements. Or so I thought. One young friend of mine said she wrote to a friend in California to tell her the news of Seiko-chan's engagement; the friend replied that the news already had been relayed by satellite and was broadcast on the West Coast Japanese-language station in Los Angeles.

But cuteness takes other forms. One example of how the Matsushita Electric Industry Company is pushing the cuteness quotient even higher is the introduction of the TH11-S29, an 11-inch color TV on a base that swivels 360 degrees. It can be adjusted 8 degrees upward or 10 degrees downward—and get this—tilted coyly sideways up to 9 degrees either way. The set has soft corners and the cabinet comes in pink, pastel green, white, or black. The TV, like the attraction to Matsuda Seiko, is primarily targeted for young women. The price here is Y54,800, or \$219.20 at the prevailing Y250 to \$1 exchange rate. No plans for export, though Quasar has been doing well with similar designer-color sets for more than a year in the U.S. 

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People

Idol Chatter

by **Lorenzo Carcaterra**



Joe Piscopo has released a one-hour comedy video featuring his rendition of **Bruce Springsteen** singing a hymn to their home state New

Jersey. The boss is the latest character to be added to Piscopo's growing repertoire: **Andy Rooney**, **Frank Sinatra**, **Jerry Lewis**, **Joan Rivers**, and **Ed McMahon** precede the singer, most of them creations worked out during Jersey Joe's *Saturday Night Live* days. "I never wanted to do impres-

sions," he told VIDEO. "The producers of the show made me do them. I guess they needed someone to fill the vacuum left behind after the original crew split. I enjoy them—especially **Sinatra**, and now the Boss. He's a wild dude and a great singer. Besides, we're both from Jersey." I'm from Jersey, are you from Jersey?

Stanley Kubrick, director of *A Clockwork Orange* and *2001* (both well worth a few video bucks), was casting about for the lead in his new film *Full Metal Jacket*. He preferred to do the casting from his living-room. Since Kubrick lives in England, this put the young American actors he was considering at a disadvantage. That is until, ta da, video came to the rescue. Leading actors such as **Anthony Michael Hall** (*The Breakfast Club*) and **Matthew Modine** (*Birdy*) submitted video screen tests for the director to study on his VCR. At least a dozen top young stars en-

tered the videoderby with **Modine** winning out. The film is set in Vietnam and will begin shooting early next year.

In *Scarface* she's **Al Pacino's** mistress. In *Into the Night* she starts out with a millionaire and ends up with **Jeff Goldblum**. Now, in *Ladyhawke*, **Michell Pfeiffer** has **Rutger Hauer** all to herself. Well, there is one little hitch. "There was a problem with us getting together," she says, "since he was a wolf when I was human and I was a hawk while he was human. But, we worked it out." Aren't you dying to know how? Rent the tape.


Woman, thy name is **Vanity**. **Prince's** former friend and protege is on her own now and, at 26, that's just the way she wants it. As she awaits the debut of her first feature, *The Last Dragon*, to hit video stores, the singer and (now) actress reflects on her Princeless life. "I guess I still love him," she says, "but we're kind of like silent partners now. We understand each other's positions. I spent more time with men when I was younger than I do now. Now, I seem to have less a need for a man, even a Prince. I think I lost my virginity at 18. Now I have to have someone I'm totally cuckoo over and they have to be cuckoo with me." You bet they do.

Billy Joel has had it with videos. "The more I watch them, the more I'm put off by them," he says. "The abstract ones aren't too terrible, but more and more you're seeing the girl in high heels and garter belt, with hints of ultraviolence. It's getting depressing and I resent it." Does **Christie** feel the same way?

People used to make fun of wrestlers. Now, thanks to **Cyndi Lauper** and MTV, they're big business once again. IUD Video is doing quite well thank you, with its *Wrestling Bloopers* video which shows you all the little errors the big guys make.

At the other end of the ring, Coliseum Video's best offer (selling for \$59.95) features **Gorgeous George**, **The Phantom**, **Classy Freddie Blassie**, **Ivan Putski**, and **Gorilla Monsoon**. Meanwhile, both Lauper and her pal **Mr. T** are busy promoting the values of wrestling. "Wrestling," says Herr T, "will be number one. Forget *Dynasty* and *Dallas*—kids don't relate to all that sex stuff. They want action." I thought that was action.

Behind the mast: **Cher** keeps surprising them—the people who don't think she can act, that is. First she turned a nice little number in *Come Back to the Five and Dime*, **Jimmy Dean**, **Jimmy Dean** and then she stunned them in *Silkwood*. Now she shocks them in *Mask*, out on video this month.

It'll be **Dan Aykroyd** of *Trading Places* doling out just the facts when *Dragnet* becomes a full-length comedy feature.... And **Emilio Estevez**, star of the hot video *Repo Man*, will portray **Shoeless Joe Jackson**, star of the 1919 Black Sox scandal in *Eight Men Out*. **John Sayles** will produce and direct and write and maybe get coffee. 

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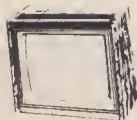
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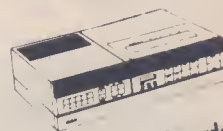
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Off the Air

The Last Word

Death of a Dish

By Bob Brewin

If anyone wants to cook a Chinese dinner for about 50 people on a rooftop, let me know. I have just the thing for it—a 1.2-meter dish which until early April picked up five channels of “direct broadcast satellite television” from the Anik satellite.

United Satellite Communications, the outfit that installed the dish, went bust—leaving me with the world’s most expensive and inaccessible wok.

As one of the few people to have a USCI dish live on his roof, I can say I had no problems with the service or the reception. Living in uncabled Washington, I jumped at the opportunity to have one of the USCI “test” dishes installed, and for the 15 months or so the company was in business my wife and I had hours of delight. We used the three movie channels almost to the exclusion of broadcast TV, never looked at ESPN, and thought the “mixed” channel could have been programmed more creatively. But with only two eyes and a choice of movies that ranged from new pre-HBO releases, sleepers like *The Grey Fox* and oldies like *The Best Years of Our Lives*, who needed another two channels, anyway?

The answer to that question is simple to anyone who has taken a drive in the country lately: anyone with enough land to hold a C-Band dish. See, while USCI

was preparing to show rural (and even suburban) America the future with its exotic KU-band minidishes offering five channels of crisp clear TV, the folks in the hustings had discovered C-band maxidishes which offered hundreds of channels (stereo radio too)—and at the right price, NOTHING.

The boom in C-band dishes would’ve been obvious to anyone driving through West Virginia where it seems every structure—no matter how humble—boasts the kind of dish NASA uses to communicate with deep-space probes. But it was hard to see the country from the plush USCI headquarters in the Burlington House in New York, so the company’s backers—Prudential Insurance (the Rock wasn’t so solid on this one) and General Instrument—kept dumping millions into a doomed cash-eating monster.

Aside from ignoring the C-band phenomenon, USCI also made a dumb miscalculation about a market it could have served well—unwired urban America. When the service was offered in the Washington/Baltimore area USCI’s phones went crazy with orders. This was potentially a rich market: two big uncabled metropolises just filled with houses whose back yards and southern exposures could not accommodate C-band dishes, but whose roofs yearned for one of them cute USCI minidishes.


That’s when USCI ran into installation problems. Urban housing tends to be solid. When a wire needs to be strung through a wall, it’s

plaster and brick that needs to be drilled through, not cheap plasterboard. Installing a dish in Washington or Baltimore also added another complication: row houses don’t have exposed walls to run wire down. Instead a hole must be drilled in the roof and the wire snaked in a concealed way down to the TV.

This took time—a lot of time. Despite the protests of USCI spokeswoman Edina Gillmor in VIDEO a few months back, installing a USCI dish in Washington is a lot of trouble. The crew that gave my roof what now passes as a hood ornament took from 9 a.m. until 6:30 p.m. to do the job. Since USCI decided to opt for a national service contract with RCA rather than hiring local entrepreneurs, the dishes were installed by union electricians. At \$15 an hour or so, this meant it took \$240 to install my dish, or about two-thirds of what I would pay the company at \$29.95 a month in a year. Add the capital costs of the satellite downlink hardware and it was easy to see why USCI—which had only 9000 paying subscribers at the end—did not make it.

The main problem that vexed the company, though, was its corporate mentality, best described as stiff and hidebound. Founded by entrepreneurs Rick Bloom and Cliff Friedman—who once did videos at the Peppermint Lounge in New York—USCI in its short maturity became

the creature of the worst kind of big-business thinkers. This means that perks for the Big Bosses came first—lush offices, high corporate pay scales, even bonuses. (How a company projecting a customer base in the millions but ended up with less than 10,000 subs pays bonuses is beyond ken.) Unfortunately for USCI, its competition—the C-band dealers—embody the growth ethic, working small lean and mean from offices that have neither the views nor the stiff overhead of USCI’s plush executive suites.

With USCI’s demise, it looks like the great technological leap forward promised by DBS has become just another technoturkey. Comsat’s Satellite Television subsidiary also folded after trying to merge with USCI. So bad is the fallout in the DBS business that the private microwave users the FCC planned to move from the DBS band have asked for their space back. This was not a technological failure, but a marketing failure. USCI proved that KU-band service (supposedly subject to interruption during heavy rain periods) is possible. With a large number of KU-band birds set for launch in the next year, this successful test of KU-band technology can be put to use by visionaries who want to use the high power and small dishes of these new birds for a variety of rooftop delivery services ranging from Federal Express and its Zap mail to entrepreneur Bloom, who hopes to get a KU-band business-data delivery service off the ground soon. 

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